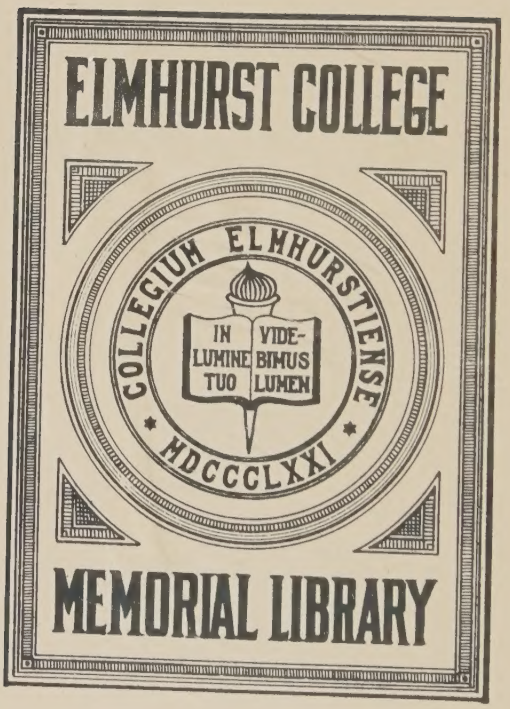
HURST COLLEGE LIBRARY
817.52T163C
CRACKERBOX PHILOSOPHERS IN AMERICAN HUMO
C001
3 2311 00107 798 2


ELMHURST COLLEGE
COLLEGIUM ELMHURSTIENSE
IN LUMINE TUO VIDEBIMUS LUMEN
MDCCCLXXI
MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/crackerboxphilos0000jenn_n7a6

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY STUDIES IN ENGLISH
AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

CRACKERBOX PHILOSOPHERS
IN
AMERICAN HUMOR AND SATIRE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK

FOREIGN AGENTS
HUMPHREY MILFORD
AMEN CORNER, E.C.
LONDON

EDWARD EVANS & SONS, LTD.
30 NORTH SZECHUEN ROAD
SHANGHAI

814.52
T163c
34805

CRACKERBOX PHILOSOPHERS

IN

AMERICAN HUMOR AND SATIRE

BY
JENNETTE TANDY, PH.D.

New York
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS
1925

ELMHURST COLLEGE LIBRARY
ELMHURST, ILLINOIS
ELMHURST COLLEGE LIBRARY
ELMHURST, ILL.

Copyright, 1925
By Columbia University Press
All rights reserved

Printed from type. Published May, 1925

To

MY FATHER

WHO LOVES A GOOD STORY

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For permission to reprint the selections quoted in chapter seven of this volume, the author is indebted to Finley Peter Dunne, to Charles Scribner's Sons, to Small, Maynard and Company, to Wallace Irwin, to Don Marquis, to The Indianapolis News, to Frank McKinney Hubbard, to Montague Glass, and to Harper & Brothers.

CONTENTS

PAGE

Introduction v

CHAPTER

I. The Comic Yankee, 1787–1830 1

Bibliography of early Yankee poems 20

II. Yankee Philosophers of the Thirties; Smith, Davis and Haliburton 24

III. The Biglow Papers 43

IV. The Development of Southern Humor 65

Selected bibliography of Southern humor and satire .. 97

V. Civil War and Reconstruction; Bill Arp and Petroleum V. Nasby 103

VI. The Funny Men: Artemus Ward and Josh Billings 132

VII. Philosophers of the Present Day: Mr. Dooley, Abe Martin, Potash and Perlmutter 158

Bibliography of the works of Kin Hubbard and Montague Glass 173

INTRODUCTION

Our literary history contains a remarkable series of satirical portraits of the common American. Every age, every country has its imaginary representations of the boor, the clown, the peasant, and the small bourgeois. Such groups of portraits often grow into recognized character types, or are taken over by men of letters after a long existence in popular anecdote. In drama they afford comic relief, in the novel they furnish atmosphere, local color background for realistic movement or picaresque adventure. There are plenty of persons resembling Launcelot Gobbo or Sancho Panza. Rarely does there arise a Reinecke Fuchs, a Til Eulenspiegel, whose tricks and misfortunes, homely wisdom, and shrewd observations on the life about him are given a certain moral or social or political significance; who becomes a symbol of a class-conscious people, a personification of the folk.

Behind a certain group of American character types, through the veil of American humorous caricatures, I seem to glimpse such a folk-hero, the homely American. This fellow, whether he be Yankee, or Southerner, or Jewish clothing merchant, represents the viewpoint of the man of the people. With wise saws and rustic anecdotes and deliberately cruel innuendo he interprets the provincial eccentricities of American life and the petty corruptions of American political intrigue. Hosea Biglow, Josh Billings, Bill Arp, Mr. Dooley, Abe Martin, are successive incarnations of Uncle Sam, the unlettered philosopher.

There is a continuity about the persistence of this homely type in our American literature which suggests a national

ideal. Each one of these creations is fathered by oral tradition. A long succession of Yankee yarns precedes the appearance of Jack Downing of Downingville. Countless sporting tales of the Southwesterner lie back of Bill Arp and Petroleum V. Nasby and Pudd'nhead Wilson. Many generations of comic Irishmen ornamented the vaudeville and the legitimate stage before Mr. Dooley. A century of reliance upon the advice of Poor Richard and the Old Farmer prepared the way by which Josh Billings and Artemus Ward reached the heart of the American public.

We have had, too, many such popular wiseacres in real life. They have always been an integral part of our social scheme. Today every Main Street has its crackerbox philosopher, every daily newspaper its "colyumist" or its platitudinous poet. Some of our best beloved demigods have been invested with this tradition. Franklin of the coonskin cap and the wise maxims, Davy Crockett, Lincoln the rail-splitter, with his "little stories," have been living examples of the sages whom Democracy delights to honor. Popular myth makes these men rustic critics, backwoods philosophers, instead of politicians and men of the world. One might point to present-day demagogues who have adopted the mask of crudity and wit to their own advantage.

There is, then, in America a long succession of these personages. They began to emerge from oral and subliterary written tradition in 1830. From 1830 to 1865–1867 this company made up a body of historically significant political caricatures of some literary merit. During the sixties and the seventies Josh Billings and Artemus Ward excelled in social caricature. In the eighties and nineties the unlettered philosopher existed only in minor capacities and a multiplicity of subtypes. In more recent times there is the same variety in characterization and the same relative unimportance, except for the political and social satire of Mr.

Dooley, Mawruss Perlmutter, and Abe Martin. The rural sage peoples the background of the local color novel, the back pages of the magazine, and the far corners of the editorial page of the newspaper. The old rustic types are still with us, the Uncle Henrys and Abe Martins, but many more of the minor critics are today city-dwellers. Frequently they are not native born.

So we live, as always, surrounded, in our books, our newspapers, our films, as in our actual social environment, by advisers and observers from the lower ranks of life. An important phase of our national as well as our literary activity is our reliance on, our apprehensiveness of, the opinions of the Perlmutters and the Lippincutts. Consciously or unconsciously, our lives are shaped by those real or imaginary homely critics, the unlettered philosophers.

Grateful acknowledgment is made of the guidance of Professor William Peterfield Trent and Dr. Carl Van Doren, and of the material assistance of Dr. George Philip Krapp, who has read the proofs, and of Dr. Thomas O. Mabbott, Miss Mary Wyman, Mr. Porter G. Perrin, Mr. John D. Wade, Mr. V. L. O. Chittick, Mr. Oscar Wegelin, Mr. U. P. James, Mr. Don C. Seitz, Mrs. Frank McKinney Hubbard, Mr. Montague Glass, and Miss Isadore G. Mudge in preparing this volume.

THE CRACKERBOX PHILOSOPHERS IN AMERICAN HUMOR AND SATIRE

CHAPTER I

THE COMIC COUNTRYMAN (1775–1839)

A FOLK-HERO is a long time gathering his myth. Whether politician or military leader, he usually goes through a period of opposition and detraction before he becomes a conspicuous figure, a chief citizen, a statesman, and at last a demigod. This happens as often to literary types as to humans. Troilus begins life as a supernumerary, one of the fifty sons of Priam. Hamlet is a creature of melodrama. Parsifal never ceases to be something of a lackwit. Even Lucifer has countless undignified and irreverent medieval incarnations before he achieves the unspeakable magnificence of Milton's fallen angel.

The same mystical process has formed in America that strange being who embodies our sardonic trustfulness, our matter-of-fact idealism, our exuberance and our Puritanism. Uncle Sam is at once a boaster and a grim-drawling philosopher. This hero of democracy has not yet received epic treatment. No one has ever assembled his exploits from among the heroic deeds of Sut Lovengood, Simon Suggs, and Paul Bunyon. Yet in the mass of folk tradition there is material for a Hudibrastic, if not a Miltonic champion of liberty.

He is a complex and mature sort of fellow. The development of his character has passed through many phases. He first appears as the Yankee, the earliest American type,

with the birth of the Revolution. As Brother Jonathan, the comic countryman, he wandered through doggerel, anecdote, and stage caricature. For forty years he clumped about in the lowest reaches of literature. The old fellow continued to be a mere figure of fun until 1830 Jack Downing went down to Portland with his load of axe-handles. Then the lowly Yankee wit first took an important place in American political and social satire. We have never since been without our homely critic of affairs.

This slow process by which the first American type came to birth is not without literary interest. Yankee Doodle mysteriously appears with the beginning of the American struggle for freedom, silhouetted against the horizon of the Revolutionary camp. The ignorant clodhopper appeals to the British soldiery as an apt caricature of the rustic rebels. The popular song is whistled, sung, and runs its course with other revolutionary ballads.

Although in Yankee Doodle we get a vignette of the hobbledehoy out to see the world, Royall Tyler's Jonathan, in his comedy *The Contrast* (1787), is the first full portrait of the New-Englandman. The earliest attempt at characterizing the real American, he became the progenitor of a long line of stage Yankees.

While undoubtedly realistic in detail, Tyler's rustic is in his main outlines a composite of the Tony Lumpkin of the eighteenth century comedy, the whimsical gentleman of the post-Addisonian essay, and the homely wits of the almanacs. This is as much as to say that Jonathan takes something from all the important media of literary characterization of his day in America. His part in the drama is a slight one, that of the comic servant, who fills in the laughs and does little to advance the plot. He has already many of the Yankee earmarks, sings "Yankee Doodle," is a "trueborn American son of liberty," "chock

full of fight," and not afraid of "them 'ere shooting irons." He goes to the play without knowing that he has been in "the devil's drawing room."

JONATHAN. So I went right in, and they showed me away clean up in the garret, just like a meeting house gallery. And so I saw a power of topping folks, all sitting around in little cabins just like father's corncrib, and then there was such a squeaking of the fiddles, and such a tarnal blaze with the lights, my head was near turned. At length the people that sat near me set up such a hissing — hiss — like so many mad cats, and then they went thump, thump, thump, just like our Peleg thrashing wheat, and stampt away just like the nation.

Jonathan is not without native shrewdness. After the play he demands his money back. "Why," says I, "no man shall jockey me out of my money; I paid my money to see sights, and the dogs a bit of a sight have I seen, unless you call listening to people's private business a sight."

As soon as he begins to court a fine city lady, and gives over his Tabitha with her "twenty acres of rock, a Bible and a cow," he begins thinking how to "contrive to pass this broken piece of silver," which has been their token of affection. His mouth is full of *'tarnals* and *I vow's*, his head thick with love at first sight. In spite of the slightness of the characterization Jonathan is the only real person in a rather conventional comedy of manners.

The popularity of Tyler's *Contrast* need not be questioned. The play was presented six times in rapid succession at the John Street Theatre in New York,[1] its initial performance being April 16, 1787. This was an unusual run for the time. It was produced in Baltimore the same year, and again in 1788. On December 10, 1787, Wignell,

[1] For these and additional details of the history of the play see Seilhamer, *History of the American Theatre*, 1888–1891, vol. 2, pp. 275–285.

the original Jonathan, gave a reading of the play in the City Tavern in Philadelphia. A month before this date Mathew Carey, in his *American Museum,* makes a passing reference to Brother Jonathan which shows he was a figure not unknown to the polite public.[2] When William Dunlap returned to America from England in the summer of 1787, *The Contrast* was still the talk of the town in New York.[3]

It was pirated as early as the 13th of April, 1791, by McGrath at Elizabeth-Town (Hagerstown) in Maryland, and his advertisement shows that he had previously played it at Alexandria, Georgetown and Frederick. The last representation of the comedy seems to have been at Boston, at the New Exhibition Room, Broad Alley, Oct. 29, 1792.[4]

When *The Contrast* was printed in 1790, 655 copies were sold, 311 in Maryland, 141 in Philadelphia, 97 in New York, 66 in Virginia, but one in Boston, 20 in Jamaica, 5 in London, 3 in Charleston, S. C., and one each in Poughkeepsie, Barbadoes, and Madeira.[5]

The literary result of all this publicity was immediate. Dunlap says[6] that Tyler's play was the direct inspiration of his own first comedy, *The Modest Soldier.* Two other plays within a year of the appearance of *The Contrast,* Dunlap's *The Father* and Samuel Low's *The Politician Out-*

[2] *Neaw,* I advise these *keind* polishers of *awer* language (makers of dictionaries) to go to brother Jonathan, for a *geide:* he'll *larn'um,* to say *keaw* for cow, *veaw* for vow, *geal* for girl, *heause* for house, and a grate many other nashun clever things, and he won't ax'um a *farding* for't nother. *American Museum,* vol. 2, p. 485. [The italics are Carey's.]

[3] Dunlap, William, *History of the American Theatre,* 1833, p. 147.

[4] *Seilhamer* II, p. 238.

[5] *Ibid.,* II, 239.

[6] Dunlap, William, *History of the American Theatre,* 1833, p. 147.

witted, contain Yankee servants modeled on Jonathan. In the next decade Reid [7] lists seven Yankees in six plays:

JONATHAN, in *The Contrast,* by Royall Tyler, 1787.
YANKEE SERVANT, in *The Modest Soldier,* by W. Dunlap, 1787.
HUMPHRY CUBB and DOLLY, servants, in *The Politician Outwitted,* by Samuel Low, 1788.
SUSANNAH, housemaid, in *The Father,* by W. Dunlap, 1788.
YORICK (true blue Yankee Federalist), in *The Better Sort* (anon., 1789.)
OBADIAH, servant, in *The Traveller Returned,* by a lady, 1798.

To these should perhaps be added the two Yorkers disguised as Yankees in Robinson's *Yorker's Stratagem,* or *Banana's Wedding* (1792), and Ezekiel Plainly in Mrs. Rowson's lost *Americans in England* (1796).[8]

Humphry Cubb in *The Politician Outwitted* [9] is the most elaborate copy of Jonathan. While he adds nothing to the characterization, we are more aware of his dependence upon the almanacs. His humor is coarse and obvious, but he is not unfavorably represented.

(*Humphry crosses the stage.*)
LOVEYET. Can you inform me, friend, where one Mr. Franklin lives?
HUMPHRY. No, I don't know where anybody lives in this big city, not I, for my part, I believe how they all lives in the street, there's such a monstrous sight of people all a-scrouging backards and forards as the old saying is. If I was home now — .
LOVEYET. Where is your home, if I may make so free?
HUMPHRY. Oh, you may make free and welcome, for the more

[7] Reed, Perley Isaac, *The Realistic Presentation of American Characters in Native American Plays Prior to Eighteen Seventy, Ohio State University Bulletin,* vol. 22, no. 26, May, 1918. *Contributions in Language and Literature,* no. 1, pp. 46–49, 61.

[8] See the account in Nason, Elias, *A Memoir of Mrs. Susannah Rowson.* Albany, N. Y., 1870. Joel Munsell.

[9] Low, Samuel, *The Politician Outwitted,* N. Y., 1788. Author.

freer the more welcome, as the old saying is; I never thinks myself too good to discourse my superiors. . . . We isn't all born alike, as father says; for my part, I likes to be friendly, so give us your hand. . . . That's hearty now — Friendship is a fine thing, and a friend in deed is a friend in need, as the saying is . . .

LOVEYET. Worse and worse.

HUMPHRY. Yes, I warrant you it will be worser and worser before long, so I must e'en go home soon, and look after the corn and the wheat, or else old father will bring his pigs to a fine market, as the old proverb goes . . .

LOVEYET. A comical countryman of mine, this. (*Aside*) What is your name, my honest lad?

HUMPHRY. Why, if you tell me your name, I'll tell you mine, d'ye see, for one good turn desarves another, as the old saying is, and evil to them that evil thinks, every tub must stand on its own bottom, and, while the grass grows, the mare starves . . .

LOVEYET. Prithee, Mr. Sancho, let's have no more of the insipid proverbs.

By 1797, then, the Yankee was an established small part, though by no means a conspicuous figure on the stage. At this time, however, the playgoing public was able to see only an occasional performance in a few small cities. The companies, which were usually made up of English actors, gave small place in their repertoire to American-made plays. We must look elsewhere for reasons for the rapid spread of the comic Yankee. The stage rather mirrored his growing fame than did much to spread this popular conception among the folk.

The place of the Yankee in the periodical essay was not yet fixed in the eighteenth century. An occasional misspelled epistle from a country cousin might be printed by Carey or Dennie, but Jonathan as a letter-writer was not to shine until Jack Downing appeared. The spread of Yankee Notions in the seventeen-nineties must be ascribed to the dialect poems in the newspapers.

Newspapers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in America took a surprising interest in belles-lettres. Short literary biographies were frequently seen in their columns. The popular Addisonian essayists took pains to display their gentlemanly erudition. Young collegians contributed translations and imitations of Latin, Greek, and the classical English poets. Especially was it fashionable to imitate the extravagant outbursts of the Della Cruscans. Robert Treat Paine and Mrs. 'Philenia' Morton continued for a long time a flowery Della Cruscan poetic correspondence in the pages of Paine's *Federal Orrery*. Other such amatory effusions were attempted by less distinguished poets and their obscure lady loves.

Tyler and Dennie and their circle quickly began to parody these extravagances. Alphabetic, alliterative, foppish, and pastoral love letters were written in verse. Dutchmen and paddys heaved gusty sighs to their lost mistresses. Newspapers copied and recopied these effusions.

It seems probable that Tyler's circle were the originators of these courtin' poems in the Yankee dialect. Thomas Green Fessenden's *The Country Lovers, or Jonathan's Courtship,* may have been the first of them. *The Orrery,* the *Farmer's Museum,* the *Dartmouth Eagle, the Columbian Centinel,* practically all the important New England newspapers copied and recopied in their poetry columns the love letters of Jonathans and Jemimas, Timothys and Tabithas. Although there were many such anonymous contributions, some of them pretty feeble, the best have been identified as the work of Isaac Story. St. John Honeywood, William Biglow, and Royall Tyler contributed poems in the Yankee dialect, of a non-amatory, descriptive, or political turn.

A description of the loved one in various and inappropriate similes was a favorite device of these courtin' poems.

In Isaac Story's *The Retort Courteous or, Susan to Sammy,* a young lady writes to her beau,

> My love is a sweet as a cake
> As strong as New England or Gin
> His flesh is as smooth as a snake,
> His eyes are as bright as new tin.

Fessenden's long poem of *The Country Lovers* is one of the best. I extract Jonathan Jolthead's proposal. It is " set to the tune of ' Yankee Doodle ' ":

> Ye young men all, and lads so smart
> Who chance to read these vasses,
> His next address pray learn by heart
> To whisper to the lasses.
>
> Miss Sal, I's going to say, as how,
> We'll spark it here tonight,
> I kind of love you, Sal, I vow,
> And Mother said I might . . .
>
> Miss Sal, you are the very she,
> If you will have me now,
> That I will marry — then you see
> You'll have our brindled cow.
>
> Then we will live, both I and you
> In father's t'other room,
> For that will sartin hold us two
> When we've moved out the loom.
>
> Next Sabbath day we will be cried
> And have a 'taring wedding.
> And lads and lasses take a ride
> If it should be good sledding.

Tyler's Della Cruscan parodies took other forms than dialect. His *Ode Composed for the Fourth of July, Calculated for the Meridian of Some Country Towns in Massa-*

chusetts and Rye in Newhampshire, is full of the spirit of the New England rustic:

Squeak the fife and beat the drum,
Independence Day is come! !
Let the roasting pig be bled.
Quick, twist off the cockerel's head,
Quickly rub the pewter platter,
Heap the nutcakes, fried in butter.
Set the cups and beaker glass,
The pumpkin and the apple sauce,
Send the keg to shop for brandy
Maple sugar we have handy,
Independent, staggering Dick
A noggin mix of swinging thick.

Sal, put on your russet skirt,
Jotham, get your boughten shirt,
Today we dance to diddle diddle.
— Here comes Sambo with his fiddle.
Sambo, take a dram of whisky
And play up Yankee Doodle frisky . . .
Come, foot it, Sal — Moll, figure in,
And, Mother, you dance up to him,
Now, saw as fast as e'er you can do
And, Father you cross o'er to Sambo . . .

Rub more rosin on your bow,
And let us have another go.
Zounds, as sure as eggs and bacon,
Here's ensign Sneak and uncle Deacon,
Aunt Thiah, and their Bets behind her
On blundering mare, than beetle blinder.
And here's the Squire, too, with his lady —
Sal, hold the beast, I'll take the baby.
Moll, bring the 'Squire our great arm chair,
Good folks, we're glad to see you here.
Jotham, get the great case bottle
Your teeth can pull its corn cob stopple.
Ensign — Deacon, never mind —
'Squire drink until you're blind.

Come, here's the French — and Guillotine
And here is good 'Squire Gallatin,
And here's each noisy Jacobin . . .

Thus we drink and dance away
This glorious INDEPENDENCE DAY !

Dennie himself affected to despise this rustic verse, yet he inserted in the *Farmer's Museum* specimens of it already published in the *Orrery* and other papers, as well as printing original contributions of the same type, and even reprinted some of these in the *Port Folio* of Philadelphia. Moreover, he published one or two as representative of the *Spirit of the Farmer's Museum,* when he made his little collection of the prose and poetry of that organ. He is not known to have tried his own hand at dialect composition.

The most admired of these country poems were included in their authors' published works, and preserved in later collections of American poetry. It seems quite possible that Lowell might have read one or two early Yankee courtships before he wrote *The Courtin' !* Many of these rustic verses appeared in the *Farmer's Weekly Museum* when its reputation was at its highest, and thus were read all over the thirteen states. Their circulation in the newspapers and periodicals carried the gen-u-ine Yankee into localities which never saw a play. The New England rustic verse of the seventeen-nineties must be considered of equal importance with the early comedies in the formation and diffusion of the tradition of the comic Yankee.

By the turn of the century the Yankee type had made a distinct impression on men's minds. His homely metaphors, mock oaths, and uncouth pronunciations were frequently seen in print. He had been rather sketchily represented as a harmless mixture of stupidity and shrewdness, intense patriotism and a talent for falling violently in love

with the wrong girl. There were to be no strikingly original interpretations of him during the next thirty years. He added a few new mannerisms, and kept all the old ones. As time went on there was a tendency to represent him more unfavorably. He was often the butt of horseplay in the drama. It was permissible to make him a coward or a rascal. All the while his reputation as a funmaker was growing and spreading in a variety of ways. He wandered rather timidly into novel, short story, and essay. A fund of Yankee tricks was kept in circulation by word of mouth. The most influential and consecutive tradition was still that of the theater. By 1825 his stage popularity was such that he became a star part, and was, in fact, for a long time the leading comic figure of American drama. The time was ripe for Jack Downing and Sam Slick.

A funny story travels as fast and as far as a scandal. The oral transmission of Yankee yarns undoubtedly reached the smallest back-settlement. Travellers found the Middle West full of such anecdotes before 1820. Estwick Evans [10] on his " pedestrious tour " of the western states noted that,

> The inhabitants of Pittsburgh are very suspicious of Yankees and, judging from the character of a few, uncharitably condemn the whole. This is more or less the case throughout the west.

Timothy Flint [11] was much annoyed on his flatboat journey down the Ohio River in 1816 by the prejudice of Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky against New England:

[10] Evans, Estwick, *A Pedestrious Tour of Four Thousand Miles Through the Western States and Territories,* 1819. (Reprinted in Thwaites, *Early Western Travels,* vol. 8, p. 253.)

[11] Flint, Timothy, *Recollections of the Last Ten Years,* 1826, pp. 32, 33. Note also Cooper's elaborate apologies for New England in his *Notions of the Americans,* 1828, vol. 1, pp. 190, 191; vol. 2, pp. 123–126; and Irving's fling at the Connecticut Yankee in *Knickerbocker's History,* ch. 10.

Though this is in some sense a Yankee region, and Ohio is called, on the opposite shore, the Yankee state, you do not the less hear at all these towns, and everywhere in this state, fine stories about Yankee tricks, and Yankee finess, and wooden nutmegs, and pit-coal indigo, and gin made by putting pine-tops in the whisky. . . . I might relate a score of Yankee tricks, that different people assured us had been played off on them. I will only remark that where we stopped at night and requested lodgings, we were constantly asked if we were Yankees, and when we answered that we were we constantly saw a lengthening of visage ensue. . . . Many a blockhead from the southern and middle states has wished to shine his hour as a wise man, and has assumed this terrific name, and thus the impression has finally been established, that almost all the emigrants who pass down the river are Yankees. The common reply of the boatmen to those who ask them what their lading is,

" Pit-coal indigo, wooden nutmegs, straw baskets, and Yankee notions."

Yankee monologues must have drawn largely upon such folk material. They were a popular feature of entertainment in 1825 and later. Celebrated " Yankee " comedians got their start with impersonations. G. H. (Yankee) Hill is said to have " made his first appearance on the stage at the Warren Theatre in his native city (Boston) . . . to recite Yankee Stories between the Play and the Farce." [12]

The elder Hackett, one of the earliest Yankee stars, made quite a reputation for himself in Yankee yarns in 1826, a year before he attempted *Solomon Swop,* and continued to interpolate them into his program for a long time after. His story of *Jonathan and Uncle Ben* was much

[12] Wemyss' *Chronology of the American Stage* (1852), p. 72. See also Hornblow, Arthur, *History of the Theatre in America,* 1919, vol. 1, p. 68, and Brown, T. A., *History of the American Stage* (1870), p. 176. Hill's *Life and Recollections,* ed. by W. K. Northall (1850), and *Scenes from the Life of an Actor,* 1853, make no mention of this feature of his career. Both contain a number of his favorite stories.

admired.[13] The popular response to the stage monologue testifies to the familiarity of the theme. They must have occupied the position of the Irish and Jew story of today.

The indispensable almanac was perhaps the written source which scattered Yankee anecdotes most widely. By 1808 Robert B. Thomas was well settled in the development of his vein of humorous personalities. His admirable little essays in the *Old Farmer's Almanac* are full of Yankeeisms. Thomas has at least sixty incarnations of New England humors and foibles before 1830. Many a family must have chuckled at Neighbor Oldfield who once "went so far as to suffer his wife to make a mince pye out of liver and turnip" and Young Ebenezer swaggering around "with a paltry old watch in his pocket and a seal as big as a kitten's head puffing his segar like a wind-broken horse." Neighbor Warmshins, Capt. Red Eye, Old Aunt Betty Beeswax, Mr. Spriggins, Tom Testy, Sam Soggy, and old Tim Twilight, the peddler, would each get a laugh.

As the anecdotes of Thomas are fresher than those of the later jest books it may be permissible to quote at length:

> Hah! How fare ye again neighbor Spriggins? Come take a chair, light your pipe, and we'll have a little bit of a tid-re-i upon farming. — How does you hay spend? do your cattle look lusty? How are Squire Thimbleberry's? Now I have but one thing against the Squire. — He will pinch his own cattle, that he may sell hay in the spring. The Squire's hay, you know, ain't of the best quality. (Jan., 1802.) [14]

[13] See Coad, O. S., *The Plays of Samuel Woodworth, Sewanee Review,* 27: 172 (June, 1919); Ireland, J. N., *Records of the New York Stage,* 1866, vol. 2, pp. 473, 474; Moses, M. J., *Famous Actor-Families in America,* 1906, pp. 141–166; Phelps, H. P., *Players of a Century,* 1880, p. 110.

[14] Thomas, Robert B., *The Farmer's Almanac Calculated on a New and Improved Plan,* Boston, 1793 to date.

Say, father Dupey, did you ever see a kaleidoscope? Aye, fags, I have! our John brought one of these fiddle-faddles from college the last vacation, and sat our girls all bewitched. He said as how the Boston ladies drew off all the pretty pictures and butterflies seen in that thing, and worked them into the dresses. So at it the girls went and filled the house with crape and muslin. No business was done but marking, painting and stitching collarettes, trifle-ettes and bum-besetts. (Sept., 1819.)

1819 is a hard year upon feminine fads. In August, Thomas ridicules the scientific housewife:

My wife, the other day, silly woman, undertook to bake a pudding by the book. And she book'd it and book'd it, and after all never cook'd it. Zounds, said I, Sarah, this never will do for working farmers. (August, 1819.)

A lively picture of the hobbledehoy is:

The Watch

John Snozzle couldn't bear to see Capt. Flippit's boys having every one a watch, while he went without; and so, after getting consent of his mother, who by all means would have Johnny appear as smart as any lad, he sold potatoes to the amount of $4.50 and bought a watch of Bill Cheatum. So John was now a real farmer dandy. But misfortune will come. It happened one day that John was leading a wild heifer. He had come nearly four miles, and was now off against his father's barn-yard, when he met Mr. Quiz. "What's the time of day, Mr. Snozzle?" says Quiz. John dropt his rope and seized his watch: when away went the heifer, and away John after her, and away went the watch into the hog stye near by. (October, 1822.)

The longer narrative fiction of the first twenty years of the nineteenth century does not reflect as much interest in the Yankee as might be expected. Ichabod Crane is the only important example of the type, and he is a dumb shadow.[15] Irving never allowed his characters to do much

[15] *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* was first published in 1819.

talking in any situation. Though Ichabod lacks the essential flavor of dialect, he is marked by the eccentric amorous egotism of his predecessors. He is the most ancient Yankee whose exploits are still widely read, the first to win immortality.

Not many novel-writers attempted a realistic portrayal of New England manners before 1830. The opening chapters of Royall Tyler's *Algerine Captive* (1797) have a fairly successful atmosphere; Miss Sedgwick's *New England Tale* (1822) and *Redwood* (1824) contain some interesting details of New England life, but they are hardly significant for their character types. The chief interest of the generation was in historical fiction, sentimental tales, and novels of horror. Romance had them in grip. The literary career of John Neal for this period is illuminating.

Neal had been a roving Yankee himself for a good part of his youth. His sojourns with tradesmen in Portsmouth, N. H., Boston, and elsewhere had made him a pastmaster in the art of swindling the other fellow. His autobiography [16] recounts the best methods of selling shopworn goods, disposing of counterfeit money, and securing the highest prices. Several of these anecdotes he used with effect in his third novel. *Errata, or The Works of Will Adams* (1823) is a not otherwise realistic story of a born coward who goes through all sorts of horrors which finally unseat his reason. *Brother Jonathan, or the New Englanders,* published two years later, made a more vigorous attempt to portray contemporary New England manners. The first fourth of its thirteen hundred pages contains effective fireside scenes and a town-meeting. The story soon slips off into hair-raising mystery. Two minor characters are rather sympathetically drawn, a village idiot, and Winslow, an active and cunning young fellow who can assume

[16] *Wandering Recollections of a Somewhat Busy Life,* 1869.

the mask of rustic simplicity at will. Neal prided himself on his dialect, which seems about as stereotyped as any of his period. Three years later he published *Rachel Dyer,* a purely historical novel of the witchcraft delusion. *Authorship* (1830) is a jumble of descriptive travels and heart-surges. Neal obviously made little use of the Yankee as such until others had shown the way. His best studies of the type are contained in the *Down-Easters* (1833), which was not written until the vogue of the stage Yankee was at its height.

Fenimore Cooper in his earlier novels made extensive use of the Yankee. *The Pioneers* (1823) contains a number of New Englanders all of whom speak a passable dialect, and display the stock Yankee characteristics. Probably Cooper was drawing upon his recollections of the population of Cooperstown, for northern New York today bears a close resemblance in manners and peculiarities to its neighboring states. *Lionel Lincoln* (1825), set in revolutionary Boston, has also a number of minor characters with Yankee earmarks. David Gamut, in the *Last of the Mohicans* (1826), is a wandering Yankee eccentric.

Cooper's Leatherstocking is sometimes cited as a Yankee. The conventional comic Yankee has nothing of the physical, mental, and spiritual characteristics of Natty Bumpo, who is a far more original and expansive creation. The similarity between the dialect of the backwoodsman and the Yankee will be found to be due to their common foundation upon the low-class speech of the time.[17] Later Yankees are much indebted to Cooper and Davy Crockett; Natty Bumpo himself owes little or nothing to the Yankee tradition. He is a frontiersman and no bumpkin.

After the dearth of Yankee characters in the novels the

[17] See, Chittick, V., L. O. *Thomas Chandler Haliburton* for the influence of the frontiersman upon Sam Slick.

abundant supply in the comedies of 1800–1830 is refreshing to the student. Although many of these are mere exaggerations of the familiar comic servant, a few have realistic touches. Jonathan Postfree's "Whoa hoy, come hither!" must often have been heard in those streets of New York along which the drovers passed with their herds.[18] His "What a-posset do you keep these kiverlids on the floor for?" might have burst from any stumbling yokel in an inn parlor.

Captain Horner in Lindsley's *Love and Friendship*[19] has all the prudence of a Down-Easter:

SELDEN. So, you will lend me no money, Captain.

CAPTAIN HORNER. Kayn't dew it now, hayn't sold my notions yit; perhaps, arter I spose of my cheese and cyder, I'll let you have matter 'f five or six dollars.

With the increasing popularity of the Yankee he is given more lines and better comic situations. In the first plays about all a Yankee could do on the stage was to make a mock proposal. Jerry Mayflower in M. M. Noah's *She Would Be a Soldier* (1819) has a good opportunity to display his boastful cowardice:

JERRY. When I came here I found some of my old comrades who fought with me at Queenstown . . . and so, while over our cups, they doubted my valor, and hinted that I run away before the battle.

JAILOR. Well, and what did you do?

JERRY. Why, I offered to fight them single handed all round, and we got into a dispute, and so when my money was all gone, they tweaked my nose, box'd my ears, and kicked me out of the tent. So then I kick'd up a row, and — that's all.

JAILOR. A very pretty story indeed! You look like a mutinous dog — so come, get into the black hole.

[18] Beach, L., *Jonathan Postfree*, 1806.

[19] Lindsley, *Love and Friendship, or Yankee Notions*, 1809.

JERRY. Now my dear jailor do let me escape, and I'll give you the prettiest little pig in my farmyard.

After some argument Jerry gets into the hole. Then the cannon begin to roar.

JERRY. (*Putting his head out of the hole.*) Oh dear, what's that? (*The great guns are going off.*) Are you sure, my dear jailor, that this prison is bombproof?

JAILOR. Take your head in, you great land turtle.

JERRY. Oh, what will become of me.

Such incidents as these are indications of that tendency to show the Yankee in action which is at the bottom of his growing favor as a low comedy figure. Samuel Woodworth's *The Forest Rose,* first played in 1825, marks the point at which the Yankee really becomes "leading man." His Jonathan Ploughboy appears in all but two scenes of the play. Jonathan's amorous misadventures keep the other characters in a tangle. He is "a little in the marchant way and a piece of a farmer besides," is ready to answer one question with another, has a fondness for "darn me" and "Bud of hope!", "wouldn't serve a negro so," and guesses and calculates in the most approved fashion. He has not a novel feature except his prestidigitatious ability to make love to three girls in the same play. This feat was not, I believe, attempted by any earlier Jonathan.

It is hard to explain what lifted Jonathan Ploughboy above Jerry Mayflower and Jonathan Postfree. He caught the popular favor, made the reputation of Alexander Simpson and George Handel Hill, and was a favorite of nearly a dozen well-known actors. As late as 1853 the play was produced in London by J. S. Silsbee, who played Jonathan for over a hundred consecutive nights. In spite of the number of Yankee plays written before 1825, few were per-

formed and none enjoyed an existence of any duration.[20] After *The Forest Rose* the Yankee was the most conspicuous character part on the American stage until the beginning of the Civil War.

The history of the Yankee thus far had been that of the development of any low comedy character. There was nothing to show that the meandering tracks over a level floor would unite in a single sharp trail when the foothills of the thirties were reached. Nothing in the conventional characterizations revealed that he would become an important figure in political satire at the hands of Seba Smith, C. A. Davis, Haliburton, and Lowell.

The dusty monotony of these attempts to present a stock figure must not be regarded with scorn. They are so many ineffectual efforts to call attention to a growing body of folk-material. If these stock Yankees had not been in existence, the satire and wisdom literature which grew up about the plain American would not have taken on the pungent personality which it did assume. Had the folk lore concerning the Yankee continued to be merely oral, he might have remained provincial. To his constant interpretation in farce and almanac we owe the perpetuation and diffusion of a tradition which has been influential in shaping the records of the dictes and sayings of our national nonentities, the unlettered philosophers.

[20] O. S. Coad, in an article on the *Plays of Samuel Woodworth* (*Sewanee Review* 27: 172, April–June, 1919), says that not more than four were acted before 1825.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF EARLY YANKEE POEMS

1785–1806

Biglow, William (Charles Chatterbox, *pseud.*)

The Country School

The Eagle, or Dartmouth Centinel (Hanover, N. H.), vol. 2, no. 36. (March 30, 1795.)

Federal Orrery (Boston, Mass.), vol. 2, no. 75, p. 298. (July 9, 1795.) Title reads: "Occupations of a Schoolmaster."

Buckingham, J. T. ed. *Specimens of Newspaper Literature,* 1852. Vol. 2, pp. 235–237.

A Song for the Fourth of July, 1806.

Port Folio (Philadelphia, Pa.), n. s., vol. 2, no. 34, p. 123. (Aug. 30, 1806.)

Damon, *pseud.*

A Pastoral.

The Eagle, or Dartmouth Centinel (Hanover, N. H.), vol. 1, no. 36. (Aug. 25, 1794.)

Fessenden, Thomas Green (Simon Spunky, *pseud.*)

Jonathan's Courtship. (Also known as "The Country Lovers.")

A New Hampshire broadside (circa 1795) is in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society Library, Worcester, Mass. It contains an early, unexpurgated version of the poem.

A Massachusetts broadside of Jonathan's courtship (circa 1800) may be found in the libraries of the Essex Institute, Salem, Mass., and the New York Historical Society, New York City.

Two Massachusetts broadsides in the Isaiah Thomas collection of the American Antiquarian Society Library, Worcester, Mass., are copied from the earlier version. Their approximate date is 1814.

Fessenden, T. G. *Original poems.* 1806. Pages 71–86. This, and the later versions, are revised.

Ducyckinck, S. A. and T. G. *Cyclopedia of American Literature.* 1866. Vol. 1, pp. 619–621.

Stedman, E. C. and Hutchinson. *Library of American Literature.* 1886. Vol. 4, pp. 283–287.

Peter Periwinkle to Tabitha Towzer (published under several titles)

Farmer's Weekly Museum (Walpole, N. H.), vol. 6, no. 281, p. 4. (Aug. 20, 1798.)

Fessenden, T. G. *Original poems.* 1806. Pp. 130–142. This is a much expanded version in two cantos.

Kettell, Samuel. *Specimens of American Poetry.* 1829. Vol. 2, pp. 116–120.

Buckingham, J. T. *Specimens of Newspaper Literature.* 1852. Vol. 2, pp. 217, 218.

The Country Junket, or, Rustic Revel.

Farmers' Weekly Museum (Walpole, N. H.), vol. 4, no. 179, p. 4. (Sept. 6, 1796.)

Fessenden, T. G. *Original poems.* 1806. Pages 30–36.

—— *A free translation of Horace's 9th ode* (*anon.*).

Farmer's Weekly Museum, vol. 5, no. 205, p. 4. (March 7, 1797.)

Port Folio, vol. 2, no. 27, p. 216. (July 10, 1802.)

Hall John Ewing (Sedley, *pseud.*)

Jonathan to Jemima, or The Fond Shepherd's Farewell.

Port Folio, vol. 2, no. 27, p. 216. (July 10, 1802.)

Honeywood, St. John

A Radical Song of 1786.

Honeywood, St. John. Poems. 1801. Page 27.

Griswold, R. W. *Poets and Poetry of America.* 1843. Page 34.

Congress Duelists.

Honeywood, St. John. Poems. 1801. Pages 90–95.

—— *Humphry Gubbin's Courtship* (*anon.*).

Farmer's Weekly Museum, vol. 1, no. 27, p. 4. (Oct. 11, 1793.)

Jemima, *pseud.*

Mima in Reply to Kadanda.

Eastern Herald (Portland, Me.).

There is no complete file of this newspaper in existence. The files in the possession of the Am. Antiq. Soc., Worcester, Mass., do not contain the poem.

Salem (Mass.) *Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 450. (May 26, 1795.)
United States Chronicle (Providence, R. I.), vol. 12, no. 596. (June 18, 1795.)
The Eagle, or Dartmouth Centinel (Hanover, N. H.), vol. 2, no. 50. (July 6, 1795.)
Federal Orrery (Boston, Mass.), vol. 2, no. 51, p. 238. (May 18, 1802.)

—— *Jonathan to Jemima* (*anon.*).
Port Folio. (Philadelphia, Pa.), vol. 2, no. 19, p. 152. (May 15, 1802.)

An undated broadside of the ballad (circa 1800) may be found in the Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.

KADANDA, *pseud.*

Cant phrases.
Eastern Herald (Portland, Me.). April, 1795.
Federal Orrery (Boston, Mass.), vol. 2, no. 59, p. 230. (May 11, 1795.)
Salem (Mass.) *Gazette*, vol. 9, no. 448. (May 12, 1795.)
United States Chronicle (Providence, R. I.), vol. 12, no. 593. (May 21, 1795.)
Massachusetts Spy (Worcester, Mass.), vol. 24, no. 1155. (May 27, 1795.)
The Eagle, or Dartmouth Centinel (Hanover, N. H.), vol. 2, no. 49. (June 29, 1795.)
Port Folio (Philadelphia, Pa.), vol. 3, no. 1. (March 12, 1803.) Title reads: "Yankee Phrases."
Spirit of the Public Journals . . . for 1805. Baltimore, Md. 1806. Pages 114–116.

—— *A Poetical Letter from Lovesick Jacob to Coy Nancy* (*anon.*).
Farmer's Weekly Museum (Walpole, N. H.), vol. 4, no. 203, p. 4. (Feb. 14, 1797.)
Dennie, Joseph, ed. *Spirit of the Farmer's Museum*. 1801. Pages 100–103.

SQUINTUM, TOMMY, *pseud.*

Tommy's Ode to Rompa.
Dartmouth Gazette (Hanover, N. H.), vol. 1, no. 41. (June 9, 1800.)

STORY, ISAAC (Peter Quince, *pseud.*)

Deifications, or Modern Love Ditties. (Two short poems with individual titles: "Sammy to Susan," and "The Retort Courteous, or Susan to Sammy.")

Story, Isaac. *A Parnassian Shop.* 1801. Pages 26–27.

TYLER, ROYALL (Spondee, *pseud.*)

An ode, composed for the Fourth of July, calculated for the meridian of some country towns in Massachusetts, and Rye in Newhampshire.

Farmer's Weekly Museum (Walpole, N. H.), vol. 4, no. 172, p. 4. (July 19, 1796.)

The Eagle, or Dartmouth Centinel (Hanover, N. H.), vol. 4, no. 5. (Aug. 22, 1796.)

Providence (R. I.) *Gazette,* vol. 33, no. 1708. (Sept. 24, 1796.)

Dennie, Joseph. *Spirit of the Farmer's Museum.* 1801. Pages 235–236.

Kettell, Samuel. *Specimens of American Poetry.* 1829. Vol. 2, pp. 48, 49.

Stedman, E. C. and Hutchinson. *Library of American Literature.* 1888. Vol. 4, p. 98.

—— *Yankee Doodle* (*anon.*). For versions current at this time see:

Sonneck, C. G. T. *Report on the Star Spangled Banner, Hail Columbia, and Yankee Doodle.* 1909.

Z., *pseud.*

Tabitha Towzer's comi-tragic response to Peter Periwinkle. Farmer's Weekly Museum. Vol. 6, no. 282, p. 4. (Aug. 27, 1798.)

CHAPTER II

THE UNLETTERED PHILOSOPHER IN THE THIRTIES

Although the belles-lettres of the early thirties scarcely knew the real American, two or three types were emerging from the underbrush of literature. The backwoodsman had already been idealized by Cooper. His comic self, half-horse-half-alligator with a touch of the earthquake, was the subject of scores of anecdotes. Some of his rough dealings and rude jokes leavened the heroic reputations of Daniel Boone and his comrades. Some were used as telling campaign material for Old Hickory. Others fringed the hunting shirt of the picturesque Davy Crockett. The Down-Easter, that "talkative, prying, speculative, jim-crack of a fellow," was equally well known. Yankee rascals and hobbledehoys could be seen in every theater and vaudeville house of the country. Yankee yarns were everywhere current, and were printed and reprinted in the newspapers and almanacs of the day No less significant was the native American as cultivated travellers had observed and reported him, a lank, voracious, impertinent, tobacco-squirting creature.

These types emerged upon a political situation of unparalleled interest to the common man. The Virginia dynasty had been set aside. John Quincy Adams had gone into retirement refusing his successor the courtesy of attending his inauguration. The mob had overturned the tables, smashed the china, and rioted about the tubs of punch set out in the White House garden for Jackson's inaugural re-

ception. There had been a similar scramble for small clerkships and postmasterships in the distribution of the spoils. The people, who had never before had a president from among themselves, were excitedly watching their hero smash the United States Bank, fight Mrs. Eaton's battles with Washington society, and force the aristocratic South back from the edge of nullification. Jonathan was viewing a new School for Scandal.

But the Jacksonian era was to be no millennium. This current of democracy run wild was as narrow, as destructive, as it was swift and ungovernable. Jackson had already shown himself a hasty and stubborn partisan. His attacks on the money power were endangering the financial stability of the nation. His sweeping and sudden application of the spoils system had driven many worthy officials to want, and let in a horde of corrupt self-seekers. To the conservative, as to his political opponents, Jackson and the Jacksonian democrats seemed not the triumphant files of a new crusade, high on the white horses of purity, but a rash leader surrounded by base sycophants. Common sense and moderation saw that the cavalcade of government might mire itself down, if it did not sweep over a precipice.

It was a clever stroke which set this latter argument against unbridled democracy in the mouth of the Yankee hobbledehoy. The comic countryman had by rights the ear of many who were deaf to the ordinary appeals of editor and orator. He could insinuate many things forbidden. The rustic observer could innocently betray official double-dealing. He could poke fun wherever he chose, tell all manner of slighting stories about the great, and satirize the humble Democrat by revealing his own gullibility. An extremely flexible characterization, this, ingenious and subtle enough to rank with Reynard and Til Eulenspiegel.

The first rustic critic of affairs made his appearance very

quietly. In January, 1830, Seba Smith published in the *Portland Courier* a letter from one Jack Downing of Downingville, away down east in the state of Maine:

PORTLAND, Monday, January 18, 1830.

TO COUSIN EPHRAIM DOWNING, UP IN DOWNINGVILLE
DEAR COUSIN EPHRAIM:

I now take my pen in hand to let you know that I am well, hoping these few lines will find you enjoying the same blessing. When I come down to Portland I didn't think o' staying more than three or four days, if I could sell my load of ax handles and mother's cheese and Cousin Nabby's bundle of footings. . . . I've been here now a whole fortnight and if I could tell ye one half I've seen, I guess you'd stare worse than if you'd seen a catamount, I've been to meeting and to the museum, and to both Legislaters, the one they call the House and the one they call the Sinnet. I spose Uncle Joshua is in a great hurry to hear something about these legislaters. . . .

They kept disputing most all the time the first two days about a poor Mr. Roberts from Waterborough. Some said he shouldn't have a seat because he adjourned the town meeting and wasn't fairly elected. Others said it was no such thing, and that he was elected as fairly as any of 'em. And Mr. Roberts himself said he was, and said he could bring men that would swear to it, and good men too. But, notwithstanding all this when they came to vote, they got three or four majority that he shouldn't have a seat. And I thought it was a needless piece of cruelty for they wan't crowded, and there was a number of seats empty. But they would have it so, and the poor man had to go and stand up in the lobby.

Then they disputed awhile about a Mr. Fowler's having a seat. Some said he shouldn't have a seat, because when he was elected some of his votes were given for his father. But they were more kind to him than they were to Mr. Roberts, for they voted that he *should* have a seat; and I suppose it was because they thought he had a lawful right to inherit whatever was his father's. They all declared there was no party politics about it, and I don't think there was; for I noticed that all who voted that Mr. Roberts *should not* have a seat, voted that Mr. Fowler *should*. So as they

all voted both ways, they must have been conscientious, and I don't see how there could be any party about it.

These letters were copied and imitated in newspapers all over the country. A pirated edition, a mixture of the spurious and the genuine letters, was brought out by a Cincinnati publisher in 1832. The *Select Letters* (1831), *The Life and Writings of Major Jack Downing* (1833), and *My Thirty Years Out of the Senate* (1859) had a wide circulation.

A new pattern had been set in American literature by the humble Jack. In Revolutionary satire and later, the authors had neatly copied European models. Trumbull's Tory squire had suffered Hudibrastic catastrophe, Brackenridge had led Teague and his captain on Quixotic rambles, the Knickerbocker had reproduced the age-old comic history. There was no near model for the shrewd, homely letters of this local satirist who was soon to have, as he deserved, a broader theme than the petty bickerings of the Maine legislature.

In addition to originating an ingenious satiric figure, Smith had brought forth a Yankee who was something more than the conventional stage butt. He had other wares to offer than the usual empty string of anecdotes. His humor was sly and his dialect unexaggerated. The glimpses of New England seen in the early letters of Jack, his Uncle Joshua and Cousin Nabby, were more piquant than any yet produced by Neal or Miss Sedgwick and the other stumbling local colorists of her day. The first attempt at presentation of the unlettered philosopher and critic in American literature had resulted in a notably realistic and unaffected characterization.

The situation established in the first letter, that of a rustic set in a complicated environment, is repeated with

surprisingly little variation. Jack watches the Maine legislature through its attempts to set the wheels of government a-going, runs for governor, departs for Washington to join the office-seekers, becomes the friend of Andrew Jackson, and is planning his own campaign for President before the first Downing letters come to an end. Only two or three times does he interrupt the thread of his adventures with a parable. He pointedly avoids, too, the funny story, anecdote or personal attack. This economy of effort makes him rather thin for later readers, who must depend on imperfect associations with political minutiæ, though they can enjoy the plainer historical allusions, and the rich bits of New England background.

Jack, when not furthering his own ambitions, is busy making mountains out of molehills. He is at his best in the exaggeration of some unimportant incident — defending Major Ingham's front door, marching his ragged company to the borders of Canada and back again, reaching his arm around the weary " Gineral " and shaking hands for him at a reception, or spending Nullification Day " up top the Congress House listening as hard as I could to see if I could hear the guns crackin' and the cannons roarin'. . . . But all the firing I could hear was inside the Congress House itself, where the members were shooting their speeches at each other."

The Major is on the whole his own best critic of political practices. His running comments in which he sustains the character of an ignorant, none too scrupulous hanger-on, while they lack wit, are the shrewdest irony, and far surpass his simple burlesques and clumsy parables:

> I fit in the Legislater as long as fighting would do any good — that is, I mean in the caucus, for they wouldn't let me go right into the Legislater in the daytime and talk to 'em there, because I was only a lobby member.

Now I think of it, I wish you would jest ask Cousin Nabby to ask Uncle Joshua to frank me on two or three pair of stockings, for mine have got terribly out at the heels. He can do it jest as well as not; they make nothing here of franking a bushel basket full of great books to the Western States. And they say some of the members of Congress frank their clothes home by mail to be washed.

Jack is more expansive at the beginning of his trip to Washington.

O, uncle, we had some great news here from Washington. Everybody's up in arms about it, and can't hardly tell what to think of it. They say the President's four great Secretaries have all resigned; only think of that Uncle. And they say, their salaries were *six thousand dollars a-year;* only think of that, Uncle. Six thousand dollars a year. Why, a governor's salary is a fool to it. On the whole, I'm glad I didn't get the Governor's office. I expect I shall have to foot it part way. I shall get there in but I shall start tonight, if I can get ready, and travel all night. It's best to be in season in such things, and I shall have to go rather slow, for I've got pretty considerable short of money, and I expect I shall have to foot it part way. I shall get there in about a fortnight, and I'm in hopes to be in season to get one of them are offices. I think it's the duty of all true Republikans that have the good of the country at heart to take hold and help the President along in these trying difficulties. For my part, I am perfectly willing to take one of the offices, and I hope some other good men will come right forward and take the others.

The attacks upon political leaders are surprisingly few. Those which do occur are indirect and their tone is reserved for the scurrilous times. Jackson who might have been the subject of an elaborate attack is mildly ridiculed for his futile rages, his favoritism, and his policy of all promise and no performance. Van Buren comes in for an occasional word. Daniel Webster is honored by being the subject of a chat between the " Gineral " and Jack, in which the Major is complimented on his resemblance to Daniel.

"Bless my stars," says I, "Gineral, you don't mean to say that I am quite as dark as he is?"

"Perhaps not," says he, "but you have the sharp, knowing look as though you could see right through a millstone. I know," says he, "that Mr. Webster is rather a dark-looking man, but there isn't another man in this country that can throw so much *light* on a dark subject as he can." . . .

"But how do you mean, Gineral," says I. "Why, to speak plain," says he, "if nullification shows its head Daniel must talk and you must fight. There's nothing else will do the job for it that I know of. Daniel must go into the Presidential chair, and you must take command of the army, and then things will go straight."

Perhaps the best satirical portrait is that of Henry Clay.

It isn't likely I shall have anything to do under my commission very soon. For some say ther'll be no fighting in the country while Mr. Clay lives, if it should be a thousand years. He's got a master knack of pacifying folks and hushing up quarrels as you ever see. He's stopt all that fuss in South Carolina, that you know was just ready to blow the whole country sky-high. He stept up to 'em in Congress and told 'em what sort of a bill to pass, and they passed it without hardly any jaw about it. And South Carolina has hauled in her horns and they say she'll be as calm as a clock now. And that ain't the only quarrel Mr. Clay has stopt. Two of the Senators, Mr. Webster and Mr. Poindexter, got as mad as March hairs, at each other. They called each other some pesky hard names, and looked cross enough for a week to bite a board nail off. Well, after Mr. Clay got through with South Carolina he took them in hand. He jest talked to 'em about five minutes, and they got up and went and shook hands with one another and looked as loving as two brothers.

Then Mr. Holmes got up and went to Mr. Clay, and, almost with tears in his eyes, asked him if he wouldn't be so kind as to settle a little difficulty there was between him and his constituents, so that they might elect him to come to Congress again. And I believe some of the other Senators asked for the same favor.

It will be noticed that Jack is inclined to gape at the nullification crisis as a big show. Mr. Webster exhibits himself as drolly as does Mr. Clay, and Mr. Calhoun is merely one of the sights. His attitude in this is typical of his general outlook upon questions of state. He is the most impartial of onlookers in political crises. Ideas do not distress him. Principles pass over his head. He contents himself with belittling the leaders by exaggerating petty incidents. Smith, his creator, was not a party politician. It is regrettable that he made no constructive criticism of the nullification movement to balance the violence of Thomas Cooper's gothic parable, *The Memoirs of a Nullifier* (1832), and Asa Greene's loose-strung anecdotes of *A Yankee Among the Nullifiers* (1833). On the other hand, Jack's refusal to commit himself is characteristic of the genuine Yankee. His indirection may be laid to the native caution of a Down-Easter.

This two-pronged satire, which impaled the sordid rustic and the magnificent statesman, had not the pointed personalities nor the searching attacks which effect reform. It put the petty squabbles and chicanery of American politics in a mildly ridiculous light, no more. The letters had no influence on political thought or political action. But the creator of Jack Downing had succeeded in setting against the most natural local background so far created in America, a character who was a novel variant of a familiar figure, based upon folk material, and who made a strong appeal to the native irreverence and common sense of his audience. The Major was so far only the embodiment of the independent rusticity of the democratic mood. Seba Smith had, however, done more than give us the first real Yankee. He had originated a most effective pattern for American political satire. Jack is the first of many untutored rustics, Gullivers among the Big-Endians of America.

It is not often that an imitator [1] excels and overshadows his original, particularly when that original is a creature so individual as Major Jack. But the author of the New York Downing's *Letters to Dwight* was a cosmopolitan who had that keen interest in current affairs which was precisely what Seba Smith lacked. Charles Augustus Davis was an iron merchant, a man of considerable financial experience, an intimate friend of Halleck and the other Knickerbockers. On the occasion of Jackson's visit to New York in June, 1833, the *Daily Advertiser* published a statement that the body of Major Jack Downing had been picked up in the Bay, "drowned at the Bridge in Castle Garden." Before the real Major's account of the accident at Castle Garden could be forwarded from Portland, Davis sent in a racy letter from J. Downing, Major, giving the true story of his part in Jackson's entry into the city. As the *Daily Advertiser* continued to print J. Downing letters, Smith showed considerable jealousy. His derogations, however, did not prevent Davis's *Letters of J. Downing, Major . . . to his old friend Mr. Dwight* (1834) from running through ten editions in 1834–1835 and being pirated by a printer in far-off Cincinnati. Davis's *Letters* could appear in New York City before Smith's; but this does not account for their subsequent popularity in book form.

Smith had been satisfied with a mild fling at the infirmities of office-seekers. Davis's criticism was pointed and constructive. He attacked the financial problems involved in the destruction of the United States Bank and the post-office scandal with an ease and elaboration which Smith never attempted. He was able to maintain the New England atmosphere, and to introduce new characters which

[1] Letters of J. Downing, Major, Downingville Militia, second Brigade, to his old friend, Mr. Dwight of the New York *Daily Advertiser*. New York, 1834. Harper.

took the public fancy. His popular anecdotes had an easy vulgarity which suited the tone of newspaper readers. To his rustic buffoonery he added an ability to set forth complicated matter in simple terms which rivals that of Swift. The homely parable was a two-edged weapon in Davis's hands. Witness Peleg Bissell's churn, the most famous of them all:

The Gineral was amazingly tickled tother day. Peleg Bissell — (you know, Peleg, who is all the while whittlin, and sawin, makin clocks and apple-parers, and churns, and lives nigh Seth Sprague's school house, down to Downingville) well, Peleg sent the Gineral a new churn of his own invention; and he calls it the 'Jackson churn' — he wants a patent for it. The cute critter says, in his letter to the Gineral, that that 'ere churn is just like his government — it's only got one wheel — and a smasher — and that it will make more butter than any other churn, and out of most anything. The Gineral is so tickled with it, he will set and turn it nearly all day. Says he, "Major, I like this 'ere churn amazingly; that Bissell is a knowin' fellow. If this churn had been made by Congress, it would have more than 50 wheels and springs, and make no more butter arterall. Major," says he, "tell Peleg I thank him, and send him a patent." . . .

34805

Jack as an amanuensis is exceedingly bothered by the "ever-lasting bach" of letters of advice the "Gineral" receives:

And I telled the Gineral, says I, "Gineral, if you expect me to satisfy all these folks, you're mistaken; we can't do it," says I. "Well, then," says he, "we must send for Mr. Van Buren." This kinder nettled me, and says I, "Gineral, you han't forgot that 'ere churn already." "No, no," says he, "we'll stick to that, Major." "Well, then," says I, "do you think that Mr. Van Buren will use that 'ere churn? — He keeps his bread buttered" says I, "by more wheels than that 'ere churn's got." "Well, Major," says the Gineral, "he is a plaguey curious crittur, arter all — he'll make wheels turn sometimes right agin one another, yet he gits along — and when he lets his slice fall, or

some one nocks it out of his hand, it always, somehow, falls butter side up." "Well!" says I, "Gineral, don't you know why?" "Not exactly," says he, "Major." "Well," says I, "I'll tell you — he butters both sides at once," says I. The Gineral drew his face all into a rumple for about a minit, and then he snorted right out.

There is a boldness about this vignette which goes far beyond Smith's sly caricatures of Clay and Webster, a directness which anticipates Lowell's John P. Robinson. Davis had laid aside, for Jack, the caution of a farmer speaking to his ever-watchful neighbors. Though he kept to the parable, a form peculiarly his own, though he paid tribute to the vulgar with anecdotes of Jackson's "pants," the liquid below the froth was clear and biting and strong. In strength of purpose, if not in power, he comes very close to the Hosea Biglow of the forties.

Any study of Davis's political writings must be made not on the basis of selected samples, but with a group of letters before one. The four or five regarding the United States Bank are a piece of very subtle psychology. A few sentences, an uncouth phrase, are nicely calculated to remove the suspicion of the farmer for the money machine. The letter about Zekle Bigelow, who has turned broker and is making scads of money speculating, buying up notes while Jackson hammers the banks, is an effective countercharge against the President, the poor man's friend. His official report on the United States Bank, *Published by Authority*, is full of circumstantial evidence, shrewdly placed.

At the time when Davis was writing the Downing letters, the Bank question was the most important issue of American politics. Jackson was never well disposed toward the Bank. His own attempts at commercial life in a small way had been failures. The party quarrels between his own

henchmen and some of Webster's friends in the Bank of New Hampshire had aroused that restless animosity which was the spring of his partisan feeling. The Bank, too, was a centralized authority, with its nucleus in the East, not among Jackson's friends, and its conservative insistence on specie payments from the branch banks was repressing the wild speculation in undeveloped western lands. From his first annual message in December, 1829, Jackson carried on a campaign to annihilate the very creditable work with which Biddle had built up a solid financial institution. The date of the recharter of the Bank was approaching. Jackson succeeded in making the recharter the main issue of his victorious election in 1832. After his reëlection the president regarded his opposition of the Bank as endorsed by the people. His maneuvers with successive Secretaries of the Treasury were to do by edict what Congress had refused to do by statute — destroy the Bank.

1833, then, was a year of suspense. No one could forecast the President's next move. There was a bare possibility that cleverly placed articles in the newspapers might turn aside prejudice, and create a popular movement in favor of the Bank, which would force Jackson to keep hands off. Davis saw this opportunity and took it. If he was unable to block Jackson, his letters were undoubtedly a restraining influence. They were widely praised, reprinted in the *Quarterly Review,* London, and had a very large sale in book form. The *Official Report* was considered his best.

Rip-raps, August 4th, 1833.

Dear Sir. — I have just got here after examinin the Bank; and it was the toughest job I ever had in my life. The Gineral was so bent on my doing it that I had to "go ahead," or I'd sneak'd out the first day. I was nigh upon a week about it, figerin and siferin all the while. Mr. Biddle see quick enuff it was no fool's journey I come on; and I made some of his folks scratch their

heads, I tell you. I gin 'em no notice of my comin, and I jump'd right in the thickest on 'em there one day when they were tumblin in and shellin out the money like corn — " now," says I, " my boys, I advise all on ye to brush up your multiplication tables, for I am down upon you with alligation and the rule of 3, and vulgar fractions; and if I find a penny out of place, the Gineral shall know it. I'm no green-horn, nor member of Congress, nor Judge Clayton, nor Mr. Cambreleng neither," says I . . . and we off coats and went at it . . . and such an etarnal batch of figerin I never see, and there wan't a blot nor a scratch in the hull on 'em.

I put a good many questions to Mr. Biddle, for the Gineral gin me a long string on 'em; and I thought some would stagger him; but he answered them all just as glib as our boys in Downingville do the catekize, from the " chief eend of man " clean through the petitions. And he did it all in a mighty civil way, too; there was only one he kinder tried to git round, and that was — how he came to have so few of the Gineral's folks among the Directors until very lately? " Why," says he, " Major," and " Major," says he (and then he got up and took a pinch of snuff, and offered me one) says he, " Major, the Bank knows no party; and in the first go off, you know, the Gineral's friends were all above matters of so little importance as Banks and Banking. If we had put a branch in Downingville," says he, " the Gineral would not have had occasion to ask such a question," and with that he made a bow, and I went home and took dinner with him. It is plaguey curious to hear him talk about millions and thousands; and I got as glib too at it as he is; and how on earth I shall git back again to ninepences and fourpence-happenies I can't tell.

After I had been figerin away there nigh upon a week, and used up four or five slate pencils, and spit my mouth dry as a cob, rubbin out the sums as fast as I did them, I writ to the Gineral and tell'd him it was no use; I could find no mistake; but so long as the Bank was at work, it was pretty much like counting a flock of sheep in a fall day when they are just let into a new stubble — for it was all the while crossing and mixing, and the only way was to lock up all the banks, and as fast as you count 'em, black their noses.

" Now," says I one day to Squire Biddle, " I'll just take a look at your money bags, for they tell the Gineral you han't got stuff enuff in the Bank to make him a pair of spectacles; none

of your rags," says I, "but the real grit," and with that he called 2 or 3 chaps in Quaker coats, and they open'd a large place about as big as the "east room," and such a sight I never see — boxes, bags, and kegs, all full, and I should say nigh upon a hundred cord. Says I, "Squire Biddle, what on earth is all this for; I'm stump'd" — "O," says he, "Major, that's our Safety Fund." "How you talk!" says I.

"Now," says I, "is that all genuine!" "Every dollar of it," says he. "Will you count it, Major?" says he. "Not today," says I, "but as the Gineral wants me to be particular, I'll just hussle some on 'em; "and at it I went, hammer and file. It raly did me good, for I did not think there was so much rale chink in all creation" . . .

Jack then tests Squire Biddle by asking him to exchange some notes on wildcat banks, which the Squire refuses to do, much to Jack's approval. He sees the Squire is a smart feller.

"Now," says I, "Mr. Biddle, I've got one more question to put to you and then I'm through. You say your bills are better than hard dollars; this puzzles me and the Gineral too — Now, how is this?" "Well," says he, "Major, I'll tell you; suppose you had a bushel of potatoes in Downingville, and you wanted to send them to Washington, how much would it cost you to get them there?" "Well," says I, "abut two shilins lawful — for I sent a barrel there to the Gineral last fall, and that cost me a dollar freight." "Well," says he, "suppose I've got potatoes in Washington, jist as good as yours, and I take your potatoes in Downingville, and give you an order to receive a bushel of potatoes in Washington, wouldn't you save two shillings lawful by that? We sometimes charge," says he, "a trifle for drafts where the places are distant, but never so much as it would cost to carry the dollars," and with that we looked into the accounts agin, and there it was. Says I, "Squire Biddle, I see it now as clear as a whistle."

Possibly this interview would not reassure a rustic in these days of Federal Reserve Banks, and farm loans and agricultural blocs. Yet there is skill in the careful building

up of Biddle's impression of honesty, shrewdness, and democratic politeness; in the backhanded swipe at Jackson's reasons for opposing the Bank, and in the concrete illustrations of great national wealth in safe hands. It is a convincing picture, if not an elegant one.

A good summary of Davis's methods was written within a year of the appearance of the book by that distinguished political economist, the editor of the *Encyclopedia Americana:* [2]

> The interest of these letters lies partly in the simple and blunt, yet forcible and not infrequently convincing manner with which certain intricate questions, of much importance to the nation, are treated in them; partly in the peculiar compound of the bluntness and shrewdness of a country Yankee, being personified by Major Jack Downing, the pretended author of the Letters; partly, also in the impudence of the real author, who, sans facon, makes the Major tell long stories of what happened between him and the President, the vice-president, Mr. Clay, Calhoun, Biddle, and other distinguished citizens; and, again, in the singular mode which the author has chosen for bringing forth his views and arguments, as Jack Downing pretends to belong to the party of the President while the real author is a member of the party which thinks that the President has wantonly disenchanted the constitution.

The rustic critic had been developed by Smith and Davis as a political satirist. It remained for a Canadian to add to this character the whimsical charm and variety of a social satirist and moralist.

Haliburton's biographer, Mr. V. L. O. Chittick,[3] con-

[2] Lieber, Franz, *The Stranger in America,* London, 1835, 2 vols. Vol. I, p. 253.

[3] See Chittick, V. L. O., *Thomas Chandler Haliburton. The Clockmaker,* first series, was printed in the *Nova Scotian,* 1835, published in Halifax, 1836; the second series was published in 1838, third series in 1840; *The Attaché,* 1843; *Wise Saws,* 1853.

siders it indubitable that he must have seen and been influenced by the newspaper Yankee. It is evident, too, that Sam Slick owes his being to a great variety of sources, literary and otherwise. He possesses all that shameless opportunism of the earlier Jack, with the sententious wisdom of a Franklin. His patriotic brag may be carried over from Miss Martineau's and Captain Hall's impression of the native American, with which the peddler is familiar. He has many of the current "Yankee yarns," and repeats phrases and anecdotes which belong properly to Davy Crockett and the Southwesterner. He is lavish with references to the wonders of the far seas and the European continent. In Sam is reanimated the amorousness of the stage Yankee, and the impudent familiarity with governors and statesmen which characterize the two Jack Downings.

In abandoning the epistolary form Haliburton secured for his sketches a distinct literary advantage. He was able to view his hero objectively. The Yankee was intimately known to his Canadian neighbor, yet known with a difference. He was close kin, yet could be analyzed with the freedom of one outside the immediate family. By discarding the first person, Haliburton could report Sam's sayings and doings accurately and at the same time throw in, as in essay form, descriptive touches and bits of setting, which enriched the background. By writing in the person of a man of the world he provided the necessary contrast for Slick which is lacking in previous Yankee studies.

The device of a traveller observing the New World was not new in American letters, but it had not before been used with so much effect. Brackenridge in *Modern Chivalry* [4] had given many incidental pictures of American manners, but his chief figures were not of sufficient interest to

[4] Brackenridge, H. H., *Modern Chivalry*, 1792–1805.

possess much satiric power. Asa Greene had twice used the traveller, in his *Yankee Among the Nullifiers*[5] and the *Memoirs of George Fibbleton, Barber,* but Greene's talent was hardly more than that of a parodist. The anonymous *Trollopiad* was a poetic parody on the narratives of foreign observers of American life. Authentic travellers' narratives had raised a great stir in England and America, and paved the way for a genuinely humorous and impersonal study of manners and customs.

In centering this study about the Yankee peddler Haliburton had chosen a type familiar to every little village and outlying cabin. Yankee dealers in notions were mentioned in the drama as early as Lindsley's *Love and Friendship* (1809). In fiction the earliest reference I have found is in one of Miss Sedgwick's[6] novels. Timothy Flint in 1816 found that the "notion man" had preceded him down the Ohio River. In real life he belonged to a large and far-flung clan which the high-minded Bronson Alcott had not disdained to join. Slick is the usual itinerant, proud of his skill in manipulating "human natur" with "soft sawder" and fond of relating his sharp deals. For all his shiftiness he is far from being the out-and-out rascal of popular tradition. With the candor of a sharper he cannot but regret that the Blue-Noses are so gullible, so improvident, and is full of a thousand plans for their betterment, a thousand projects for improvement of their economic status, a thousand wise saws for their admonishment. The shrewd Yankee peddler is more complex than the village hobbledehoy affected by Tyler and Smith. He has many advantages over the simpleton in point of literary interest.

[5] Greene, Asa, *A Yankee Among the Nullifiers,* 1833.

[6] Sedgwick, Catherine Maria, *A New England Tale,* New York, 1822, Vol. I, p. 45.

Not the least of the Clockmaker's charms is his inconsequent variety. He rambles easily from an interview with an M.P. to a dinner with a queen of the South Sea Islands, back to a disquisition on the failings of the Blue-Noses, or the story of a horse race, caps his observations on gulling the Irish with a Down-East yarn, and points off every tale with a moral ingeniously expressed. His manner is as lively as his tales are varied. His favorite subjects are many: internal improvements, slavery in the States, relations between the colonies and the mother country, the foibles of womankind, the virtues of a provident farmer.

Sam's political outlook is of course divided. He has wandered so long among the Blue-Noses that his interest is as great for their affairs as for his own country's. It must be remembered that his first audience is Canadian. He distrusts the habitant in politics and the politician everywhere. Edward Everett and Daniel Webster have his friendship but not his confidence. His best hope is for the solid business man and the careful farmer. "Politics," he observes, "make a man as crooked as a pack does a peddler. Not that they are so awful heavy either, but it teaches a man to stoop in the long run."

In his moralizing tendencies Slick swings round the circle back to the mentors of the Thirteen Colonies — Poor Richard and the other almanac makers. His shrewd materialism is as kindly and as matter-of-fact as that of Franklin. Occasionally he makes use of some ancient saw, "Brag is a good dog, but Holdfast is better." Usually his homely admonitions are couched in their own pithy phrasing. They are always italicized. His faith in them is deep-seated, for, "says father, 'There's a moral, Sam, in everything in natur.'"

Many of his sententious observations deserve quotation.

An airly start makes easy stages.

All critters in natur are better in their own element.

A man that has too many irons in the fire is plaguey apt to get some on 'em burnt.

Poverty is keen enough without sharpening its edge by poking fun at it.

And, a more serious indictment of our democracy, "Power has a nateral tendency to corpulency."

Others imitated Haliburton's innovation of the Yankee in social satire. The more important of such imitations were Miss Ann Sophia Stephens's *Jonathan Slick*, Hammett's *A Stray Yankee in Texas* and *Piney Woods Tavern*, and the Smith-or-Davis *May Day in New York*, 1845.[7] None of these attained the popularity or possessed the elusive originality of *The Clockmaker*. Haliburton had indeed rounded out the conventional conception of the unlettered philosopher. He completed the Yankee tradition. The comic countryman, the rascal, the serious political satirist, the moralist, the critic of native manners all hailed from Down-East.

For bibliographies see:

The Cambridge History of American Literature, vol. 2.
Chittick, V. L. O. *Thomas Chandler Haliburton.*
Wyman, Mary. *Seba Smith* (in preparation).

[7] This pamphlet was for a long time attributed to Davis, but I believe Miss Wyman has shown the author to be Seba Smith.

CHAPTER III

THE BIGLOW PAPERS

The comic Yankees of the thirties, amusing and popular as they were, had been used in the cause of mere political controversy. Their impersonations had been fired by no moral fervor, their gay and cutting attacks on personages of state had been backed by no deep abiding principles. Aside from the aptness of the Down-East background, most of their appeal lay in the ready extravagance of their travesties of current events. Even the easy garrulity of Sam Slick had often a flavor of superficiality. Haliburton, Smith, and Davis, in remoulding their characterizations, were too much hampered by the stage Yankee who was their model. Lacking the white heat of enthusiasm and the fire of genius, their satires did not bear the mark of high artistic achievement.

To be sure, their successor, who was supplied with the great occasion, and possessed of the moral earnestness and the abilty to meet its needs, produced in Hosea Biglow a satiric figure which, however well it satisfied his own generation, is sixty years later almost forgotten. For a pitfall awaits every political satirist. The more minutely he caricatures the affairs of his own day, the more obscure and uninteresting he will appear to those that follow. If he assumes whole-heartedly the party animosity of his time, he will by later critics be accused of bigotry. Lowell ran the risk, and suffers from these imputations. Though his political message seems at times ungenerous and hard, his Yankee portraits are always masterly, and his pictures of

office-seekers and petty politicians will live as long as democracy.

In 1846 the great pieces of literary propaganda which were to have an immense influence upon the establishment of the equality of man and the integrity of the union had not appeared. The emotions of New England and the country at large were yet to be overwhelmed by Harriet Beecher Stowe and Edward Everett Hale. In the middle forties the enthusiasts of the anti-slavery party had already approached the public through the songs of Whittier and Longfellow, but minor lyrics will not completely voice the feeling of a great cause nor phrase the complicated issues of national policies. The results of the Mexican War, the problems of Southern migration into the regions across the Mississippi, of planter control of Congress and the presidency were ready for a Northern interpreter.

Lowell, an active but not a Garrisonian abolitionist, a Yankee of the Yankees, had presumably been converted to the anti-slavery party by Maria White in 1840. In his poetry he had been growing more and more outspoken, had advanced from the veiled symbolism of *Rhoecus* and *The Falcon* through the measured indignation of *Prometheus* and *A Glance Behind the Curtain* (1843) to the bare-faced hostility of *The Present Crisis* (1844). While the *Biglow Papers* were appearing he was writing for the *Boston Courier* and the *Anti-Slavery Standard* a series of prose papers on the political situation.[1] These essays show him as one of the wittiest controversialists of his day. In the cool, hard-hitting, fluent writer of editorials we see little of the hidden poet.

But the Lowell who was "one half clear mystic and enthusiast, the other half humorist"[2] comes to clear ex-

[1] Lowell, J. R., *Anti-slavery Papers,* 2 vols., 1902.

[2] *Letter to C. F. Briggs, Nov. 15, 1847.* Norton, C. E., *Letters of James Russell Lowell,* vol. 1, p. 117.

pression in the first letter from Hosea Biglow.[3] Much of what he says here would have been unprintable a few years ago:

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,
  Hope it ain't your Sunday's best; —
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
  To stuff out a soger's chest;
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,
  Ef you must wear humps like these,
S'posin' you should try salt hay fer't,
  It would du ez slick ez grease . . .

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
  Tell they're pupple in the face, —
It's a grand gret cemetary
  Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
  So's to lug new slave-states in
To abuse ye, and to scorn ye,
  An' to plunder ye like sin . . .

'Taint your eppylets an' feathers
  Makes the thing a grain more right;
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
  Will excuse ye in His sight;
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
  An go stick a feller thru,
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
  God'll send the bill to you.

This is strong language. Even in quarters disposed to favor the sentiments, the Biblical references gave some offence. Thomas Hughes later excused them as a heritage of the Puritan intimacy with Jehovah.[4] On the whole the poems were met in the partisan spirit they desired to arouse. Southerners derided them as "miserable balder-

[3] First printed in the Boston *Courier,* June 17, 1846. *Biglow Papers,* first series, was published in 1848.

[4] *Biglow Papers, first series,* edited by T. Hughes, London, 1859. Preface, p. 16.

dash." Edgar Allan Poe, in the year of their publication, declared that, "Mr. Lowell is one of the most radical of the Abolition fanatics; and no Southerner who does not wish to be insulted and at the same time revolted by a bigotry the most obstinately blind and deaf, should ever touch a volume by this author." [5] Cultivated critics of the north were lukewarm.[6] The most favorable, the *North American Review,* pronounced them "very fair fun." Probably many gentlemen must have felt with N. P. Willis that the poems were "smothered in eccentricity." [7] But the New Englanders, gentle and simple, were delighted. Hosy, with his downrightness, his independence, and his irony not only made Oliver Wendell Holmes, "wriggle all over." [8] His swinging verses were folded into almanacs and tacked up in blacksmith shops.

The Calvinistic doctrine of "Right's right and wrong's wrong" was no doubt part of their appeal. The first letter in particular is as forth-putting as a four-corners farmer in town-meeting. Their indignation was too strong to be mistaken for mere funmaking, yet they had the turns of phrase, the homely allusions, the dry-lipped sarcasm, the native exaggeration incongruously coupled with tight understatement that the Down-Easter recognized and chuckled over in his next-door neighbor. Such lines as:

> An' you've gut to get up airly
> Ef you want to take in God.

must have set other people than Dr. Holmes wriggling with delight at their audacity.

[5] Poe, E. A., Lowell's *A Fable for Critics.* Works, vol. 6, pp. 240–249.

[6] "As a general thing (I must confess) the notices have not been favorable. But I am quite satisfied to see the feathers fly." Norton, C. E. *Letters of J. R. L.,* vol. 1, p. 146.

[7] Willis, N. P., *Hurrygraphs,* 1851, p. 48.

[8] Norton, C. E., *Letters of J. R. L.,* vol. 1, p. 144.

One suspects, too, that it pleased the abolitionists and their more or less open sympathizers to have the Lord ranged on their side in such a downright manner. *Dieu et mon droit* has been a rallying cry for recruits in a good many wars. Present-day historians do not ascribe the movements which brought on the Civil War solely to a wave of humanitarian sentiment. Separation of the economic interests of North and South, and chagrin at loss of political prestige, also impelled the factions of the Whig and Free Soil and Republican parties. It must be remembered that the first series of the *Biglow Papers* was begun and carried out as campaign material, the second as war propaganda.

The moral earnestness of the letters of Mr. Biglow was enlivened not merely by rustic figures of speech. With the third letter began a series of political portraits which surpassed any of the caricatures of Seba Smith and Charles Augustus Davis. The refrain of *What Mr. Robinson Thinks* became international property:

> Fer John P.
> Robinson, he
> Sez the world'll go right ef he hollers out Gee!

Doggerel though the poem may be, it crystallizes the relation of the ignorant voter to the boastful demagogue.

The *Debate in the Sennit* is a more direct caricature. It purports to be a speech of Calhoun, with comments by listening fellow-members. Lowell has parodied the bombastic oratory of the Southerners in a most irreverent and insulting manner:

> " Here we stand on the Constitution, by thunder!
> It's a fact o' wich ther's bushels o' proofs;
> Fer how could we trample on't so, I wonder,
> Ef 't worn't thet it's ollers under our hoofs? "

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;
"Human rights hain't no more
Right to come on this floor,
No more'n the man in the moon," sez he.

Poe was right. No fire-eating planter should read this. Yet aside from the use of names the satire is not personal. Its inflammatory doggerel is directed against the Southern majority's general policy of browbeating the North, rather than against any particular moves of party leaders.

The next two poems, the *Pious Editor's Creed* and *A Letter from a Candidate for the Presidency* are in some sort Lowell's masterpiece of irony. They are less extravagant in tone, less disagreeably jingling in meter than those which preceded them. Each is a close-framed miniature of a type of low politician frequently to be seen in the halls of democracy.

The pious editor is the self-exposed hypocrite, a man of unimpeachable sentiments, qualified by an unscrupulous self-sufficiency. The type is seen again in Dr. Holmes's sly interpretation of an austere voluptuary in his poem, *Contentment*. The Editor affirms, among other thirty-nine articles,

I du believe in special ways
O' prayin' an' convartin';
The bread comes back in many days,
An' buttered, tu, fer sartin;
I mean in preyin' till one busts
On wut the party chooses,
An' in convartin' public trusts
To very privit uses . . .

I du believe thet I should give
Wut's his'n unto Caesar,
Fer it's by him I move an' live,
Frum him my bread an' cheese air;

I du believe thet all o' me
  Doth bear his superscription, —
Will, conscience, honor, honesty,
  An' things o' thet description . . .

In short, I firmly du believe
  In Humbug generally,
Fer it's a thing thet I perceive
  To hev a solid vally;
This heth my faithful shepherd ben,
  In pastures sweet heth led me,
An' this'll keep the people green
  To feed ez they hev fed me.

A little-known poem by St. John Honeywood, *The Selfish Man's Prayer on the Prospect of War*,[9] shows that revolutionary satirists could also make use of the smug pharisee.

Again the clouds of battle lour
  With terror and dismay;
Protect me, all disposing power,
  In this disastrous day!

As in the camp the soldiers learn
  To riot, curse, and swear,
'Twould give my pious soul concern
  To have my boys go there!

Then while my neighbors and their sons
  Are called to war and arms,
Grant that my boys, secure from guns,
  May cultivate my farms!

And while with taxes and expense
  My kindred are distress'd,
O grant that all my hard-earned pence
  May slumber in the chest! . . .

[9] Honeywood, St. John, *Poems, with some pieces in prose.* 1801. Pages 61–64.

O may my lands yield twenty-fold,
The army to supply;
May fat contractors, fraught with gold,
My copious harvests buy!

May continental rags no more
Usurp the place of coin;
But crown my basket and my store
With blessings from the mine.

What though the fig tree shall not bloom,
Or oxen seek the stall;
What though it be thy righteous doom
That half our youth shall fall;

Yet if thou wilt thy servant bless
And my posterity,
I'll joy in my own righteousness
To perpetuity.

The *Letter from a Candidate for the Presidency* is also reminiscent. Uncle Joshua and Cousin Eb had written similar epistles to Jack Downing twenty years before. But as an "epistle candidatial," as the Reverend Mr. Wilbur calls it, its application is most timely. It must be remembered that the Whigs in 1847 were making a final attempt at compromise and camouflage in order to retain the Southern element in their faction. Taylor was nominated as a man who had never committed himself on any party issue, and it was said had never even voted. A Southerner and a slaveholder, the hero of the recent Mexican War, he declared himself a Whig. This declaration was taken at the North as an implication of his sympathy with those opposed to the extension of slavery. Lowell had elsewhere [10] commented most freely on the vagueness of Taylor's campaign utterances, and the extreme care with which

[10] *Anti-Slavery Papers, passim.*

he and his supporters had avoided the expression of any opinion.

Most interesting is the unfolding of Taylor's colorless personality. The candidate begins in all boldness. Something is rotten in the state. After two spread-eagle verses he wobbles:

> Thet is, I mean, it seems to me so,
> But, ef the public thinks I'm wrong,
> I wun't deny but whut I be so.

Ez fer the war, he continues,

> Ez fer the war, I go agin it, —
> I mean to say, I kind o' du, —
> Thet is, I mean thet, bein' in it,
> The best way wuz to fight it thru . . .
>
> Ez to the slaves, there's no confusion
> In my ideas consarnin' them, —
> I think they air an Institution,
> A sort of — yes, jes so, — ahem:
> Do I own any? Of my merit
> On thet pint you yourself may jedge
> All is, I never drunk no sperit
> Nor I hain't ever signed no pledge.
>
> Ez to my principles, I glory
> In hevin' nothin' of the sort;
> I ain't a Wig, I ain't a Tory,
> I'm jest a candidate, in short.

Having thus outlined his platform, he adds in a postscript the appeal *ad hominem:*

> Ef you git *me* inside the White House
> Your head with ile I'll kin o' 'nint
> By gittin' *you* inside the Light-House
> Down to the eend o' Jaalam Pint.

The Candidate then nimbly restates his position on slavery, and closes:

> Tell them thet on the Slavery question
> I'm RIGHT, although to speak I'm lawth;
> This gives you a safe pint to rest on,
> An' leaves me frontin South by North.

This caricature has something more than a temporary or a provincial significance. It substantiates Lowell's claim to the best doggerel wit, the raciest satiric verse in American literature. As an indictment of the self-interest, the time-serving which defeats the ends of democracy, it leaves nothing to be desired.

The *Biglow Papers* were not the decisive factor in the campaign of 1847. General Taylor was elected and served out his abbreviated term. But their ingenious political aspersions, their appeals to the New England conscience, made an undeniable impression on public sentiment. They prepared the way for the immediate response to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Man Without a Country*.

The poems themselves had nothing of the deliberate attempt to build up a village background which the satirists of the thirties had made. We hear little of the topography of Jaalam or the uncles and aunts and cousins of Mr. Biglow. Hosea himself is a somewhat vague personality. Lowell thought of him, he says, as "such an upcountry man as I had often seen at antislavery gatherings, capable of district-school English, but always falling back into the natural stronghold of his homely dialect when heated to the point of self-forgetfulness."[11] And he is usually heated to self-forgetfulness. His is the unconscious humor of the indignant idealist.

As a foil for the seriousness of the upright Mr. Biglow

[11] *Biglow Papers*, second series, Boston, 1867. Preface, p. 5.

the author was moved to create Birdofredum Sawin, a rascal, clown, and pilgrim. The second letter of the first series of the Biglow Papers is from a disgruntled private among the volunteers for war with Mexico. He enlisted in high hopes of extending Anglo-Saxon supremacy over an El Dorado. Military discipline, heat and sand and prickly pears, have sapped his morale. Fighting is fighting, and the Mexicans are "human beans" like other people. These Anglo-Saxon ossifers are not so considerate and respectful on the Rio Grande as they were at the recruiting meeting in Faneuil Hall. There is a good deal of this "Bill to Mable" stuff, and an occasional bit of American exaggeration:

One night I started up on eend, an' thought I wuz to hum agin,
I heern a horn, thinks I, it's Sol, the fisherman hez cum agin,
His bellowses is sound enough, —ez I'm a livin' creeter
I felt a thing go thru my leg, — 'twuz nothin' more'n a skeeter!

Altogether Birdofredum is a thoroughly disillusioned hobbledehoy, who has lost most of his respect for authority. The second letter from B. Sawin, several months later, represents another step in his disintegration. Lowell had begun to work out something no one else was subtle enough to hit on. Others had shown the Yankee as the finished scalawag, but he traced the making of the rogue from the country boy. In the second letter Birdofredum is about to be mustered out, and is taking stock of himself and his future. He has but one eye, several broken ribs, and a wooden leg.

Ware's my left hand? O, darn it, yes, I recollect wut's come on't
I hain't no left arm but my right, and thet's got just a thumb on't;
It ain't so hendy ez it wuz to call'late a sum on't.

He hasn't found any gold mines nor have the "gin'rals" and the "cunnles" passed down much of the glory to him.

But glory is a kind of thing I shan't pursue no furder
Coz thet's the off'cers parquisite, — ourn's on'y jest the murder . . .
At any rate I'm so used up I can't do no more fightin',
The on'y chance thet's left to me is politics or writin':
Now, ez the people's gut to hev a millingtary man,
An' I ain't nothin' else jest now I've hit upon a plan,

And so, like the previous Candidate, he nominates himself for the presidency, on a wooden-leg-peace platform, with no pledges. His slogan is to be "Old Timbertoes."

Then there are other good hooraws to dror on ez you need 'em.
Sech as the One-Eyed Slaterer, the Bloody Birdofredum;
Them's wut takes hold o' folks thet think, ez well ez o' the masses
An' makes you sartin o' the aid o' good men of all classes.

There's one thing I'm in doubt about; in order to be Presidunt
It's absolutely ne'ssary to be a Southern residunt;
The Constitution settles thet, an' also thet a feller
Must own a nigger o' some sort, jet black, or brown or yeller.

Now, as Sawin has no objection "agin ownin' anything, (except the truth, sometimes)" his final request is that a subscription be taken up to buy him a "low-priced baby":

An' then, to suit the No'thern folks, who feel obleeged to say
They hate an' cuss the very thing they vote fer every day,
Say you're assured I go full butt fer Libbaty's diffusion
An' made the purchis on'y jest to spite the Institootion.

The following letter continues the burlesque of Taylor's platform. Mr. Sawin concluded that the Presidential cup is beyond his reach, and endorses Old Rough and Ready as jest as good to vote for. This, the final letter of the first series, leads us no further into the merry mazes of Sawin's downward progress.

In the first letter of the second series, January, 1862,[12]

[12] The second series appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1862–May, 1866. It was first published in book form in 1867.

Birdofredum relates his recent history and present happy state. On his way home after his discharge in Mexico [13] he drops into a grog house in a little Southern village. Here, as all the stranger thet's around, he is tarred and feathered, ridden on a rail, pelted with "dead-ripe" eggs, and put in state's prison for ten years on the charge of stealing a horse.

Two year age they ketched the thief, an' seein' I wuz innercent
They jest oncorked an' le' me run, an' in my stid the sinner sent. . . .
When I come out the folks behaved mos' gen'manly and harnsome;
They 'lowed it wouldn't be more'n right if I should cuss'n darn some
The Cunnle he apolergized; suz he, "I'll du wut's right,
I'll give ye satisfection now by shootin' ye at sight,
An' give the nigger (when he's caught) to pay him fer his trickin'
In gittin' the wrong man took up, a most H fired lickin' . . .
I'll be yer friend thru thick an' thin, an' in all kines o' weathers,
An' all you'll hev to pay fer's jest the waste o' tar an' feathers:
A lady owned the bed, ye see, a widder, tu, Miss Shennon;
It wuz her mite; we would a' took another, ef ther'd ben one;
We don't make *no* charge fer the ride an' all the other fixins.
Le's liquor; Gin'ral, you can charge our friend for all the mixins."

Mr. Sawin finds himself not so badly off. He collects his arrears of pension from the government before Sumter is fired on, and marries Mrs. Shennon — (Her thirds was part in cotton-land, part in the curse o' Canaan).

An' here I be, ez lively ez a chipmunk on a wall,
With nothin' to feel riled about, much later'n Eddam's fall,
Ez fur ez human foresight goes, we made an even trade
She gut an overseer, an' I a femily ready-made.

[13] Mr. Sawin appears to have forgotten that his last letter of the first series was written from Jaalam. What is more surprising, his first wife, Prudence, is called in this letter Jerusha.

After a brief description of his bride's person and disposition, which are not so attractive as her widow's thirds, he comes to the point of his letter: a request that Mr. Biglow should urge Mrs. Sawin the first to get a divorce in Massachusetts without troubling him.

An' there's a heap of argyments thet's emple to indoose ye:
Fust place, States's Prison, — wal, it's true it warn't fer crime, o' course,
But then it's jest the same fer her in gittin' a divorce;
Nex' place, my State's secedin' out hez leg'lly lef' me free
To marry any one I please, pervidin' it's a she;
Fin'lly I never wun't come back, she needn't hev no fear on't.
But then it's wal to fix things right fer fear Miss S. should hear on't.
Lastly I've gut religion South, and Rushy she's a pagan
Thet sets by th' graven imiges of the great No'thun Dagon . . .

An' ef J. wants a stronger pint than them thet I have stated,
Wy she's an aliun in'my now, and I've been cornfiscated.

In still another letter Sawin tells how he gut religion South. At Mrs. Shennon's request he attends a camp meeting.

"Nothun religion works wal North, but it's ez soft as spruce
Compared to ourn, for keeping sound," sez she, "upon the goose;
A day's experunce 'd prove to ye, ez easy's pull a trigger,
It takes the Southun pint o' view to raise ten bales a nigger."

His loss of principle has not impaired B. S.'s interest in theology. He is much impressed with the "sarmon." The parson, "didn't put no weakenin' in, but gin it to us hot."

All things wuz gin to man for's use, his sarvice and delight;
An' don't the Greek an' Hebrew words thet mean a Man mean White?
Ain't it belittlin' the Good Book in all its proudes' features
To think 'twuz wrote for black an' brown an' 'lasses-colored creatures?

After listening to these and other arguments, actually not much exaggerated beyond the precepts of Southern theorists, Sawin feels conviction weighin' down somehow inside his hat. Human nature, for a descendant of the Puritans, cannot go much lower. Birdofredum's description of his political change of heart is in keeping with his moral degradation, but slightly anti-climatic. The golden stream of Southern oratory has convinced him that Jeff is bringing the millennium.

We'll hev an Age o' Chivvelry surpassin' Mr. Burke's
Where every fem'ly is fus-bes, an nary white man works.

"Aristocrats of Normal blood," it stands to reason, "can't measure votes with folks thet get their livin's from their farms." Still, he was not at first in favor of secession, but, "after layin' low a spell," he is convinced the North is wrong. The Southern fire-eaters are unanermous, they have the British aristoxy on their side, are not bothered with an argooin' Congress, they are taking forts while the Yankees hang back, "to git the leave o' the nex' Soopreme Court."

Long's them things last, (an' I don't see no gret signs of improvin')
I shan't up stakes, not hardly yit, nor't wouldn't pay fer movin';
For, 'fore you lick us, it'll be the long'st day ever *you* see.
Yourn, (ez I 'xpec' to be nex' spring)

B., Markiss O' Big Boosy

So exit Mr. Sawin, now well settled in life. Of all the hundred Yankee wanderers from Brother Jonathan down, he is the most adventurous and the most amusing. Though cut on a time-frayed pattern, the incidents of his argonautic voyage are without precedent. As a psychological

study he is unique. There is consistency in the rascal's adaptation of principle to expediency, and the truth of mockery in his mixed fate of good and bad fortune. More plausible than Petroleum V. Nasby, he delights us as Nasby delighted Lincoln. If Lowell intended B. S. in the beginning for a clown, the buffoon soon developed a strong individuality. After a blow of the slapstick he always tumbles to his feet, with a bow. He is as resourceful as he is ingenious in self-excuse. Above all he stands as the first, best, and only study of the development of the Yankee rascal.

In preparing the *Biglow Papers* for publication, Lowell felt the need for another foil to the indignant Hosea. Consequently he prefaced the poems with comments by the village minister, the Reverend Homer Wilbur, a long-winded, prosy old divine, who edits, advises, and excuses Hosea's efforts. It is easy to see how Lowell at first enjoyed embroidering the poems with Mr. Wilbur's crotchets and latinities. In the earlier series the parson steals many paragraphs from the *Anti-Slavery Papers*. Much too witty they are for the village dominie. For the political satires he is a new type, though there is a hint of him about Slick's friend Mr. Hopewell, who figures prominently in *The Attaché*. Mr. Wilbur was much admired by Thomas Hughes and the English reviewers,[14] but it is safe to say that their admiration will not be shared by the modern audience. We are relieved when Lowell kills him off before the end of the second series, for by the time we have reached his insufferable dog-latin *Kettlepotomachia* we would not wish him a natural death. Still, he provides contrast for the other two.

[14] *Biglow Papers*, first series, edited by Thomas Hughes, London. Preface, p. 8; *Gentleman's Magazine*, N. S., 25: 464; *Chamber's Journal*, 37: 293–296 (May 10, 1862).

Lowell's original plan for Hosea, Sawin, and Mr. Wilbur may be seen from the preface to his second volume: [15]

> Thinking the Mexican war, as I think it still, a national crime committed in behoof of Slavery, our common sin, and wishing to put the feelings of those who thought as I did in a way that would tell, I imagined to myself such an upcountry man as I had often seen at antislavery gatherings, capable of district-school English, but always instinctively falling back into the natural stronghold of his homely dialect when heated to the point of self-forgetfulness. When I began to carry out my conception and to write in my assumed character, I found myself in a strait between two perils. On the one hand, I was in danger of being carried beyond the limit of my own opinions, or at least of that temper with which every man should speak his mind in print, and on the other I feared the risk of seeming to vulgarize a deep and sacred conviction. I needed on occasion to rise above the level of mere *patois* and for this purpose conceived the Reverend Mr. Wilbur, who should express the more cautious element of the New England character, and its pedantry, as Mr. Biglow should serve for its homely common-sense vivified and heated by conscience. The parson was to be the complement rather than the antithesis of his parishioner, and I felt or fancied a certain humorous element in the real identity of the two under a seeming incongruity. . . . Finding soon after that I needed someone as a mouthpiece of the mere drollery, for I conceive that true humor is never divorced from moral conviction, I invented Mr. Sawin for the clown of my little puppet-show. I meant to embody in him that half-conscious *un*morality which I had noticed as the recoil in gross natures from a puritanism that still strove to keep in its creed the intense savor which had long gone out of its faith and life. In the three I thought I should find room enough to express, as it was my plan to do, the popular feeling and opinion of the time.

The threefold conception of New England life and character omits but one attribute of the descendant of the Puritans, an obscure sense of beauty, a deep-hidden re-

[15] *Biglow Papers,* second series, 1867. Preface, pp. 6, 7.

sponse to nature and to the things of the heart. This quality is belatedly revealed in the Hosea of the second series. His later letters have a mellower quality. There are little pictures of the New England fireside, of spring on the hills of Massachusetts. The debate between the Bunker Hill Monument and Charles River Bridge, the address to the Cabbage Heads in March Meetin' show that fantastic whimsies have been allowed to soften his irony.

The autobiography of Hosea, slender as it is, is completed in the rambling epistle to the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Hosea confesses he has lost his desire to be funny. The world and the war have set his head abuzz. Where is peace? He wanders over his hills trying to get in tune with nature.

> Under the yaller pines I house,
> When sunshine makes 'em all sweet-scented,
> And hear among their furry boughs
> The baskin' west-wind purr contented,
> While 'way o'erhead, ez sweet an' low
> Ez distant bells thet ring fer meetin',
> The wedged wil' geese their bugles blow,
> Further and further South retreatin'.
>
> Or up the slippery knob I strain
> An' see a hunderd hills like islan's
> Lift their blue woods in broken chain
> Out o' the sea of snowy silence;
> The farm-smokes, sweetes' sight on airth,
> Slow thru the winter air a-shrinkin',
> Seem kin' o' sad, an' roun' the hearth
> Of empty places set me thinkin'.

This is as effective a picture as any in *Snowbound*. Why is it that when Lowell, Whittier, or Emerson essayed to describe a New England scene, they touched it always with melancholy? Hosea's mood reflects his own losses. He

is numb with longing for his three boys who have fallen in battle.[16] All he can do is pray for victory.

Come, Peace! not like a mourner bowed
For honor lost an' dear ones wasted,
But proud, to meet a people proud,
With eyes thet tell o' triumph tasted;
Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt,
An' step thet proves ye Victory's daughter!
Longin' fer you, our sperits wilt
Like shipwrecked men's on raf's for water.

Come, while our country feels the lift
Of a gret instinct shoutin' forwards,
An' knows thet freedom ain't a gift
Thet tarries long in han's o' cowards!
Come, sech ez mothers prayed for, when
They kissed their cross with lips thet quivered
An' bring fair wages for brave men,
A nation saved, a race delivered!

Comment on the dignity and restraint of this poem is superfluous. The faults and banalities are redeemed by the sincerity of its emotion.

The poetic touches of the second series save what would otherwise be very dull political writing. It is curious that all the early unlettered satirists seem to peter out. Smith and Davis's Jacks hardly survive their first series. Sam Slick holds out through three volumes, but a fourth is most insipid. The Downing letters of the Civil War, whoever may have written them, are coarse, vulgar, and unworthy. B. Sawin's last epistles, *Suthin in the Pastoral Line* and the *Letter to the Atlantic Monthly,* barely preserve the

[16] For the history of Lowell's five young relatives who died in the war, see Hale, E. E., *James Russell Lowell and His Friends,* 1869, pp. 180–185; and Scudder, H. E., *James Russell Lowell,* vol. 2, pp. 30, 31.

readers of the second series of the *Biglow Papers* from a state of boredom.

This may be due to the narrowness of Lowell's view of the political situation. In 1847 he had spoken as a young radical, on behalf of a band of single-minded anti-slavery agitators. In 1862 his perspective had not widened. The speech of Jeff Davis to the Confederate Congress is as warped an interpretation as the address of "John C. Calhoun, sez he," to the National Assembly, and is even more personal. The poem on the Mason and Slidell affair, *Jonathan to John,* shows none of the comprehension we expect of a future minister to the Court of St. James,

> It don't seem hardly right, John,
> When both my hands was full,
> To stump me to a fight, John, —
> Your cousin, tu, John Bull!
> Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
> We know it now," sez he,
> "The lion's paw is all the law,
> Accordin' to J. B.,
> Thet's fit for you an' me! "

Whether or not Lowell deliberately ignored the legal rights of diplomatic emissaries, he was in this poem voicing the opinions of a jingoistic faction. Similarly, in the *Speech in March Meeting* he asserts in 1866 that no promises, no oaths of the Southerners are to be trusted, that they do not intend to be loyal, that they should not be readmitted to the rights of citizenship without further tests and severe impositions. There was, it is true, an element in the country which was only too ready to revive the old hatred of England, and a political faction which, unfortunately, seized its opportunity of adding to the crushing financial burdens of the South and postponing for years her economic rehabilitation. It is a disappointment to

discover Lowell ranged with these rabid gentlemen. His distortion of facts and the perversion of opinion make his presentation of the Civil War and the opening of the reconstruction period a very one-sided thing. One expects to find no scruples, no charity, in David Ross Locke, but not in the author of the *Commemoration Ode* and the *Vision of Sir Launfal.*

His achievements in satire must be judged, then, not according to the fairness of their interpretation of current history. From that viewpoint they fall below the best satiric writing of the period. Bill Arp shows a tolerance and a restraint which Hosea has not. The Yankee satirist excells in his racy use of the vernacular, his wit, his whimsies, and his power of creating character.

Lowell might be said to have divided himself into compartments. In the *Biglow Papers* we see nothing of the man of letters, the diplomat, the graceful verse-writer. The poems and the literary essays, the political articles give no hint of the creator of Hosea and Birdofredum. Like Kim, he can say, " Praise be to Allah who gave me two separate sides to my head."

In comparison with Whittier and Longfellow and Hawthorne and Emerson as interpreters of New England life and tradition the comic satirist looms large. Though he skims over the depths and subtleties of the Puritan heritage, he avoids also the shallows of Mid-Victorian sentimentalism. And he cuts deeper than any other into the gnarled fibers of the cross-grained Yankee. Hosea, Birdofredum, John P. Robinson, The Pious Editor, the Candidate, are a Hogarthian company. Lowell's range and penetration in satirical portraiture are unsurpassed in America.

As a piece of sustained irony the *Biglow Papers* has escaped the careful study of present-day critics. We have no other satirist at once so witty and so racy. Still, one

would hardly venture to accord him the unqualified praises of Thomas Hughes:

> Greece had her Aristophanes; Rome her Juvenal; Spain has had her Cervantes; France her Rabelais, her Molière, her Voltaire; Germany her Jean Paul, her Heine; England her Swift, her Thackeray; and America has her Lowell.

No, on the whole, Mr. Lowell is a little lower than these angels.

For bibliographies of Lowell see *The Cambridge History of American Literature,* vol. 2, pp. 544–550, and Scudder, H. E. A list of the writings of James Russell Lowell, arranged as nearly as may be in order of publication. (In Scudder, H. E., *James Russell Lowell, a Biography,* 2 vols., 1901; vol. 2, pp. 421–447.)

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHERN HUMOR

The unusal situation in the antebellum South was not the patriarchal plantation, with its easy hospitality and aristocratic social atmosphere. That was in the natural order of things. Neither was there anything amusingly incongruous to the Southern eye in the fine-mannered impoverished planter or the eccentric old negroes. They belonged to the pattern of everyday life. Uncle Remus and Colonel Cyarter alike are the creations of Reconstruction times.

The unusual situation which furnished the romantic and the humorous elements of life to society of slavery days was represented by the lower South and the Southwestern border. Here class distinctions were overturned, the gentleman found strange bedfellows and undertook new shifts. Each young brother and cousin wrote back from Alabama or Mississippi of catamounts and rascally speculators, backwoods adventures and encounters with odd characters. Even in the fifties when Olmsted [1] found the back country a dreary half-worked-out land, the frontier had not receded beyond ken. In the Appalachians were the mountain whites, along the great rivers the "river rats," in the forests the "clay eaters" and the "piny woods tackies" who still represented the primitive and grotesque. Here

[1] Olmsted, Frederick Law, *A Journey in the Back Country,* N. Y., 1860. Mason Brothers. See also Dodd, W. E., *The Cotton Kingdom,* 1919.

and there among the large plantations could be found the small holdings, the village stores, the blacksmith shops, kept by poor whites who added to an independent crudity an anomalous social position which stamped them as oddities. On the borders or in Old Virginia this class was regarded as fit material for literary effort of a humorous kind. The great body of Southern antebellum humor centered about the poor white.

It may seem strange that the negro had so little place in the literature of the Old South. Southern philosophers and pamphleteers had established the fact that he was only half-man. Aristotle's dictum that the psychology of slaves is not fit subject for tragedy was unconsciously followed almost without exception. A sentimental passage in *Swallow Barn*[2] was the only serious attempt at representing the pathetic negro. Let Whittier and Longfellow make their abolitionist moan over the Dying Slave in the Dismal Swamp. In spite of the popularity of negro dances and negro melodies, the negro did not become a comic figure in fiction. Whether this was due to a defensive political attitude or to a smothered fear of insurrection cannot be gathered at this date from the subconscious mind of the Southern slaveholder. The non-slaveholding class was a safe butt as well as a social anomaly. Its members were politically negligible. Cut off by geographical barriers, by social stigma, by lack of opportunity, they remained as they had been. Pictures of the life and characters of this class of poor whites became by established convention the stock of Southern humor.

[2] Kennedy, John Pendleton, *Swallow Barn,* 1832. For other characterizations of the negro in the Southern pro-slavery novel, see Tandy, J. R., *Pro-Slavery Propaganda in American Fiction of the Fifties, South Atlantic Quar.* XXI, 41–50, 170–178 (Jan., Apr., 1922).

This evolution of a new type had its primary origin in the romantic. America has always idealized the pioneer. The frontier scouts were, long before the thirties, figures of wonder and prowess. Leatherstocking, for all his quaint speech, is never irreverently represented. A vague verbal tradition of the comic backwoodsman had not been exploited it literature. Historic characters such as Boone and Carson had been frankly idealized.

The first Southern humorist was an out-and-out frontiersman. David Crockett, member of Congress from West Tennessee [3] seems to have made much the same impression on the Washington of 1827 that Franklin had made on Paris forty years before. Both were a nine days' wonder to the populace. As France in 1783 had made the Noble Savage her ideal, so the United States, just before the Revolution of 1830, was carried away by the notion of the Indian fighter, the bear-hunter. The frontiersman was the man for the people. It is quite probable that Crockett was in some sense a political John the Baptist for Andrew Jackson.

The authorship of the numerous works attributed to Crockett is as yet by no means clear. The *Sketches and Eccentricities* is unquestionably written by some enterprising interviewer. It makes no pretence. The *Life of David Crockett* was for a long time attributed on reasonably good authority to Matthew St. Clair Clarke.[4] Recently an autograph letter from Crockett has been discovered in which he says that he himself wrote the book, which was

[3] Crockett was in Congress 1827–1831.

[4] J. C. Derby in his *Fifty Years Among the Authors, Books and Publishers,* 1844 (p. 552), says that the *Life of David Crockett* was written for him by Matthew St. Clair Clarke, the Secretary of the Senate, and the *Exploits in Texas* by Richard Penn Smith. The *Life of Martin Van Buren* has been attributed to A. S. Clayton.

revised and corrected by Mr. Clarke. There is no evidence for or against a similarly supervised process of authorship for Crockett's *Tour to the North and Down East* and *Life of Martin Van Buren.* The *Exploits in Texas* is doubtful.

The whole body of material by and about Crockett, though not of a high order of literary effort, contains a large quantity of southwestern humor. The classic tale of the famous coonskin which was pulled through the wall between the logs twenty times, and thus made to pay for twenty drinks, and the story of the compliment the illustrious marksman received from his animal target ("Don't shoot, Mr. Crockett, I'll come down") are the real frontier stuff. These and many other anecdotes make the volumes the great comic cycle of border exploits.

The Crockett legend was evidently widely popular and persistent. It is significant that "Go ahead" was chosen for the motto of General Tom Thumb.[4a] Painted on his coach, it carried the message of the Southern frontier far and wide into foreign parts. Colonel Crockett's life in a redaction considerably reduced, which included the account of his adventures in Texas, has been printed and reprinted for nearly a hundred years. Later biographies have made him a familiar figure to every small boy, who worships him along with the other frontier heroes.

That Crockett, in spite of his geographical situation, was from the first regarded as a western figure, is evident from the comment of the anonymous author of the *Sketches and Eccentricities of Colonel David Crockett,* whose preface and introduction refer to their subject as a "celebrated backwoodsman," and give at some length a description of the "far off West" of the Mississippi valley. The resemblance between Boone and Crockett is elaborated. Each lived in a frontier state.

[4a] Werner, M. R., *Barnum,* 1923, p. 89.

Each lived in the same circumstances: the one waged eternal war with the Indians, and hunted game for recreation; the other waged an eternal war with the beasts, and served his country when his aid was wanted. Each could send the whizzing ball almost where he wished it. . . . In point of mind Col. Crockett is decidedly Boone's superior.[5]

There had been many backwoodsmen before Crockett in fact. In literature he was antedated by Natty Bumppo and his copies. The significant thing about the reputation of Crockett is that he is the first frontiersman about whom a distinct comic tradition arises. The mythical "ring-tailed roarer," "half-horse-half-alligator, could whip his weight in wildcats," had never before claimed a name. After Crockett it became almost necessary that a Western candidate for the presidency should claim a suitably wild nickname, or at least some of the personal characteristics of the frontiersman. So we have *Old Rough and Ready, The Railsplitter, The Log Cabin Campaign,* and even *The Mill Boy of the Slashes.*

As in point of time Crockett is the earliest Southern humorist, so the tale of his adventures marks what was to be for a long time the distinct separation between the romance of the Southern border and its comic spirit. The low caste white man of the South was to be for many years a comic figure. Not until the days of the local color movement did he achieve again the dignity of tragedy and romance. Then, at the hands of Joel Chandler Harris,[6] Mary Noailles Murfree, Sarah Barnwell Elliott, and John Fox, Jr., the lives of the poor whites were invested with sentiment and pathos.

The earliest concern of humorous Southern literature

[5] *Sketches and Eccentricities.* Preface, pp. 19, 20.

[6] Some unusual stories of Southern whites may be found in Harris's *Free Joe* (1887) and *Mingo* (1884).

was with a rapidly extending new land. As the Indians were removed to reservations or pushed westward, vast tracts were opened to settlement. Into these came the wealthy Virginian, moving from his worn-out lands on the seacoast, with his wife and children, his house servants and his fifty or a hundred field hands, his family carriage and a long line of loaded wagons which conveyed his household goods. On the heels of the wealthy planters followed a second group from the Eastern states, young men, gentlemanly, well educated, accustomed to good society, but without money. Some few were able to take up small tracts of wild land. Most flung themselves into the practise of law or medicine, set up schools, started newspapers. One and all went into politics the minute they could find an opening. Among such young seekers of wealth and influence were Jefferson Davis, Albert Sidney Johnston, L. Q. C. Lamar, General Quitman, and General Reuben Davis.[7]

It was an interesting life in which they found themselves, a civilization in some features unlike any other social situation which has existed in the United States. In this new country they had access to the homes of the recently settled great planters, many of whom were able to maintain the atmosphere of culture and ease which they had left in the older states. At the same time, the young lawyer was thrown with rascally speculators and rough and ignorant clients who possessed squatters' rights, the young physician must often pass the night in remote cabins de-

[7] See the following biographies: Johnston, William, *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston,* 1871; Mapes, Edward, *Lucius Q. C. Lamar,* 1896; Davis, V. J., *Jefferson Davis,* 2 vols., 1890; Davis, Reuben, *Recollections of Mississippi and Mississippians,* 1891; Claiborne, J. F. H., *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman,* 2 vols., 1860. See also the comments in *Flush Times.*

void of all the comforts and nearly all of the decencies of life, the young politican must drink and be merry with men whom he had heretofore considered much below his condescension. The incongruity of such associations was humorous rather than oppressive to most of the young bloods. It was relieved by the many opportunities for a day's hunting, and enlivened by the long winter evenings in tavern or country house, given up to retailing the latest yarns. One would like to have heard Jefferson Davis repeat a tale of his yellow-headed old millwright,[8] or Longstreet recount a "Georgia Scene."

The telling of such incidents as arose was sharpened by long practice. The South has always been famous for its raconteurs. The conventions of oral repetition, its frequent digressions, its hastily sprung surprise ending, its effective use of grotesque dialogue, its leisurely march, became characteristic of Southern humor.

Sporadically a large number of Southern newspapers took to printing sketches of life and adventure by local authors. Each contributor hid himself behind a nom de plume, as a perfect gentleman should. Some few were published by local presses.

In 1846[9] appeared the first printed collection of stories by Southern authors, the *Big Bear of Arkansaw,* edited by William Trotter Porter. Porter was a Yankee who on

[8] Davis, V. J., *Jefferson Davis,* 2 vols., 1890; vol. 1, p. 173.

[9] The bibliographies of R. W. Griswold's *Prose Writers of America,* the *Cambridge History of American Literature,* and Foley's *First Editions of American Authors* give this date as 1835. In 1835 Thorpe was twenty years old. He did not go South until 1836. The first announcement of the book appears in the *Spirit of the Times* for March 27, 1845. The *Big Bear of Arkansas* was contributed by Thorpe to the "Spirit," March 27, 1841; *Tom Owen the Bee-Hunter,* July 21, 1839. The original mistake seems to have been a misprint in Griswold.

graduating from Dartmouth had spent five years (1822–1827) teaching school in Virginia and Georgia. After a varied experience as compositor and printer he published the first number of the New York *Spirit of the Times,* a weekly sporting paper. Its circulation from the first was 6000 copies. Owing to the opposition to sport in many parts of the North, and the great interest in racing, hunting, and other such diversions in the South and West, the *Spirit of the Times* had always a large proportion of Southern subscribers. By January, 1835, Porter found himself sole editor and proprietor. No other paper filled the same place. Many editors attempted to steal its title. Porter remarks:

> This makes the fourth time the immediate jewel of our soul has been pilfered from us by some *Hateful Parkins* in this kind of way. We were first frightened out of our propriety by a great, bloody Anti-Masonic "Spirit" in the western part of this state; a Republican Spirit then started in Maryland, then all sorts of Spirits in Arkansas and Missouri, and now the deep damnation of our taking off is chargeable to a democratic Spirit in Philadelphia.[10]

In the autumn of 1836 Porter began the first of what was to be a series of visits to the South and West. He went by boat from Wheeling to New Orleans and thence from plantation to plantation, not returning to New York for almost eighteen months. His brothers George and Frank were both residents of Mississippi. On his journeys he made many Southern friends with whom he corresponded voluminously.

Almost from the first, Porter's interest in Southern life and Southern sport had led him to publish in the *Spirit of the Times* frequent original contributions from Southern

[10] Quoted in Brinley, Francis, *Life of William T. Porter,* 1860, p. 62.

friends, and to reprint sketches from Mississippi and Alabama newspapers. Accounts of turkey-shootings in Arkansaw claimed equal space with anecdotes of fox-hunting in Yorkshire. He had ready a large stock of Southern humorous sketches from which to make his printed collection.

Of the twenty-four stories, one is from Illinois and one from Michigan. Practical jokes and hunting adventures make up the majority of the narratives. Various odd characters appear: Uncle Billy Patterson, Hoss Allen of Mississippi, Simon Suggs, the boastful Big Bear himself. Altogether it is a jovial collection.[11]

Within a year Porter followed the *Big Bear of Arkansaw* with another collection, *Colonel Thorpe's Scenes in Arkansaw* (reprinted as *A Quarter Race in Kentucky*). T. A. Burke edited a similar volume, *Polly Peaseblossom's Wedding*. The *Library of Humorous American Works*, first published by Carey and Hart, later by Peterson, of which these formed a part, contained also a number of single works by Southern authors. Among the series were almost the whole of Thompson, Hooper's *Simon Suggs* and *Widow Rugby's Husband*, John S. Robb's *Streaks of Squatter Life*, Madison Tensas's *Swamp Doctor's Reminiscences*, George M. Wharton's *New Orleans Sketch Book*, J. M. Field's *The Drama in Pokerville*, and Thorpe's *Mysteries of the Backwoods*. Appleton and Harper of New York also published a number of volumes of Southern humor in the forties and fifties.

By 1846 there was a considerable body of fugitive pieces representing the lighter and less romantic aspects of Southern life, dealing particularly with the customs of its remoter and less civilized districts. This material had al-

[11] A complete list of the stories and their authors, mostly pseudonymous, will be found in the bibliography attached to this chapter.

ready attracted the attention of a larger audience. Its own worth had been aided by the publicity given to it by William Trotter Porter.

What was the character of this material? Who were the men who created it? It has already been said that they were in general young fortune-hunters from an older, more cultured scene. Georgia was the setting of the first sketches of the Lower South. Early in the thirties a middle-aged Georgia judge of considerable prominence, who had gone to the back districts of his native state as a young lawyer, began to contribute to the Augusta *Sentinel* a series of anecdotes drawn from his memories of the rough days he had spent in riding circuit. These humorous sketches were signed with the pen names Hall and Baldwin. They were published anonymously at Augusta in 1835 as *Georgia Scenes* and later acknowledged by Augustus Baldwin Longstreet. Upon their republication by Harper in 1840 they sold 8000 copies.

During his school days in New England, Longstreet had come under the influence of Lyman Beecher. In 1837 he was converted to Methodism. In 1838 he became a Methodist parson.

> After Judge Longstreet became a minister of the Gospel he was very anxious to suppress it (the *Georgia Scenes*) because words and expressions are used unbecoming a minister, but the book could not be suppressed on account of its merits and popularity.[12]

He contributed articles and stories to the *Methodist Quarterly*, the *Southern Literary Messenger*, the *Southern Field and Fireside*, the *Magnolia*, and the *Orion*. In 1840 he was made president of Emory College, Georgia, where

[12] Rutherford, M. L., *The South in History and Literature*, 1906, pp. 6, 7.

he became known as a prominent nullifier. He was successively president of Centenary College, Louisiana, the University of Missouri, and South Carolina College at Columbia. No man was more closely identified with the spirit of the South. As a young man he had adventured in middle Georgia. When nearly sixty he migrated as president of the newly opened university to the scene of the *Flush Times* in Mississippi. Although notoriously ugly, he must have possessed great charm. His son-in-law, L. Q. C. Lamar, reports that [13]:

> He was gifted with both a ready and a sparkling wit, and a shrewd and rollicking humor . . . while also he was an accomplished mimic. The rendition of one of his own "Scenes" by himself was a thing not soon forgotten by anyone who heard it.

The *Georgia Scenes* opens with a bit of admirable comedy.[14] The narrator, climbing a long and gentle slope in the "Dark Corner of Lincoln County," hears in the brush a loud altercation:

> You kin, kin you?
>
> Yes, I kin, and am able to do it! Boo-oo-oo! Oh, wake snakes, and walk your chalks! Brimstone and — fire! Don't hold me, Nick Stoval! The fight's made up; and let's go at it. — My soul if I don't jump down his throat, and gallop every chitterling out of him before you can say quit!
>
> Now, Nick don't hold him! Just let the wild cat come, and I'll tame him. Ned'll see me a fair fight, won't you, Ned?
>
> Oh, yes; I'll see you a fair fight, blast my old shoes if I don't.
>
> That's sufficient, as Tom Haynes said when he saw the elephant. Now let him come.

The alarmed listener forces his way through the undergrowth to stop the fight and finds but one combatant, lying

[13] Mapes, Edward, *Lucius Q. C. Lamar*, p. 39.

[14] Georgia Theatrics. In *Georgia Scenes*, pp. 9–11.

prone in the dust. The supposed remnant, a boy of eighteen, rises from the earth and " with a taunting curl of the nose " explains:

> There ain't nobody there, nor ha'nt been nother. I was jist seein' how I could ha' *fout*.

The rehearsal is related in three pages, with an ingenuity and an economy worthy of Mark Twain. Its hero is one of the earliest ancestors of Huckleberry Finn.

In his description of a real " courthouse fight " Longstreet has nicely set off big Billy and little Bob, Ransy Sniffle, the referee and general trouble-maker, and the two quarrelling wives who are back of the whole business. The meeting of two such champions as Billy and Bob is to be settled only by a drawn battle. Their mutual apologies for having lost the victory are fine drollery.

It is not always the surprise ending which furnishes the excuse for a sketch. The genre pictures of a gander-pulling, smoking out an unpopular country schoolmaster, a country race meeting, a backwoods dance, a horse swap, a foxhunt will be read for their leisurely realism and vivid pictures of a life gone by. Perhaps the most typical of Longstreet's tales, for its masterly handling of conversation, its fantastic ending, the vividness of its scene, and its insight into upland psychology is the sketch of three old women, rambling toothlessly through a long fireside argument, which he gives in *A Sage Conversation*.[15]

One of Longstreet's favored occupations is observing the equine as well as the human race. He can describe " the forty-second cabhorse " with an ease and an individuality which show his delight in the best and the worst of the species. He can talk about a broken-down nag for fifty lines on end without wearying himself or getting prosy.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 186–196.

Nor does he merely enumerate the points of an animal. Little Bullet "had obviously suffered severely for corn; but if his ribs and hip bones had not disclosed the fact *he* never would have done it; for he was in all respects as cheerful and happy as if he commanded all the corncribs and fodder stacks in Georgia."[16] Gridiron, who took part in the gander-pulling, "was a grave horse; but a suspicious eye which he cast to the right and left, wherever he moved, showed that 'he was wide awake,' and that 'nobody better go fooling with him,' as his owner sometimes used to say."[17] Sally Spitfire and Old Smooth Tooth reveal themselves in their nicknames.

The things which Longstreet has left undone are significant. He avoided the pointed exaggerations and the more seriously indecorous scenes of many writers of the frontier. He has not a tale of mighty slaughterings of bear or panther. His object is to entertain and to revive old memories, not to astonish his gentle readers. The chief fault of his raconteur style is the elaborateness of his introductions and conclusions. Once within, his narrative technique rivals that of the modern short story, which it strongly resembles in rapidity, in deft management of conversation, and trick endings. Oddities of character are suggested but not unduly emphasized. The vivid pictures of a lively unsophisticated state of society will always be of interest to the student of manners and customs.

Thomas Bangs Thorpe, on the other hand, belongs more strictly to the writers of sportsman's stories. A Yankee born and bred (Thorpe did not go to Louisiana until he was twenty-one), the border was always for him a region of the fantastic and wonderful. The best of his tales may be found in *The Hive of the Bee-hunter* (1854). Indians figure frequently in his buffalo hunts in western Texas.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 25. [17] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Wild cats, grizzly bears, turkeys, and opossums are the subjects of his tales. He carefully indicates the habits of each wild beast, and the best methods of coming upon it. In fact, his sketches are rather like the present-day articles in *Field and Stream.* He has considerable interest, too, in natural scenery, particularly in the panorama of the Mississippi.

Thorpe had an eye for frontier types, which resulted in his writing down several personages who have an almost legendary fame. The bee hunter, a familiar figure who wandered from place to place cutting down bee trees; the boastful braggart, the mightly keelboatman. The famous *Big Bear of Arkansaw* is the natural product of his region, a state, in his own words,

> where the *sile* runs down to the centre of the 'arth and government gives you a title to every inch of it. Then its airs — just breathe them and they will make you snort like a horse. It's a state without a fault, it is.[18]

He has a gun which is " a perfect epidemic among bear," and a dog who " always barks at the right time, bites at the exact place, and whips without getting a scratch."

The Big Bear tells the usual American string of tall stories. The champion tale is one about his repeated attempts to kill a monstrous old black bear, who could " tire down and bust up a pack of hounds and a horse that were used to overhauling everything they started after in no time." After months of attempted sallies there is a daylong chase. In the course of it the bear is treed.

> A greenhorn friend of mine, in company, reached shooting distance before me, and blazed away, hitting the critter in the centre of his forehead. The bear shook his head as the ball struck it, and then walked down from that tree, as gently as a lady would from a carriage.[19]

[18] *The Hive of the Bee-Hunter,* p. 76. [19] *Ibid.,* p. 88.

The hunter fires, but his gun only snaps. His other caps are lost, and the bear leaps over the ring of dogs and gets away. The dogs take up the trail to a lake. The hunter rolls a log into the lake and paddles across to an island. The bear jumps into the lake again, where Bowie-knife, the dog, pulls him under and drowns him. But it turns out to be the wrong bear. The next day the hunter sees the bear climbing his own fence and shoots him at last.

'Twould astonish you to know how big he was: I made a *bed-spread of his skin* and the way it used to cover my mattress and leave several feet on each side to tuck up, would have delighted you. It was, in fact, a creation bear, and if it had lived in Samson's time, and have met him in a fair fight, he would have licked him in the twinkling of a dice box.[20]

The famous bear hunter is a type of backwoods boaster of whom many minor writers of wild sports make use. Perhaps the best of such tales is the Swamp Doctor's narrative of the wooden-legged old b'ar hunter.[21] Mike Fink, the legendary keelboatman and Indian fighter, was chronicled by Emerson Bennett [21a] and John G. Neihardt.[21b] The bee-hunter is a minor figure in Cooper's *Oak Openings.*

Longstreet was contented with painting rustic fairs and festivals, Thorpe had excelled in depicting the wilder and woollier aspects of the lower South. But the Southwest was already going through a new phase of economic development. The opening up of the back settlements had brought with it speculation in land values. The era of inflation

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 92.

[21] L., H. C. (Madison Tenzas, *pseud*), *Odd Leaves from the Life of a Louisiana Swamp Doctor,* 1843. *The Indefatigable Bear-Hunter,* pp. 164–175.

[21a] Bennett, Emerson, *Mike Fink, a Legend of the Ohio,* 1848.

[21b] Neihardt, John G., *The Song of the Three Friends,* 1919.

was accompanied by litigation and rascalities which had by no means stopped with the panic of '37. It was the more sordid side of life in the Southwest which claimed the attention of Hooper and Baldwin.

Although Johnson J. Hooper's *Simon Suggs* precedes the *Flush Times,* yet Baldwin's series of sketches serve as a more generalized introduction to the settlement of the back country.

Baldwin came to the new state of Alabama in 1836, a youthful adventurer at the law, with little but a pair of half-filled saddlebags. The land along the Tombigbee River had been taken over from the Indians not long before. Gainesville, where Baldwin settled, was the shipping point for much of eastern Mississippi and Alabama. L. Q. C. Lamar, who went to Oxford, Mississippi, not far from Gainesville, in 1849, wrote to a friend:

> This is a magnificent country for planters. There are men who left Newton County poor and in debt ten years ago who now have a good plantation and fifteen or twenty hands, and are buying more every year.[22]

It was a rich and virgin country.

> Old settlers in joyous reminiscence tell of the time when successive wagons, constituting trains in length from a quarter to half a mile, rolled their bales into the streets of the place for shipment to Mobile. . . . It was a rich harvest field for the lawyers, whither they congregated like birds of the air. Here Baldwin found a congenial field for the display of his talents. Litigation and politics were largely the popular amusements and pastimes, and all hands patronized them freely, either in suing or being sued, running for office, or supporting an office-seeker.[23]

Such opportunities attracted not only the well born. Members of what is still known at the South as "the

[22] Quoted in Mapes's *Life of Lamar,* p. 37.

[23] *The Library of Southern Literature,* 16 vols., 1908–1913; vol. 1, p. 177.

overseer class," sharpers, swindlers, bullies, and odd characters of all sorts, were numerous.

The condition of the country (Baldwin says) may be imagined: — vulgarity — ignorance — fussy and arrogant pretension — unmitigated rowdyism — bullying insolence — , if they did not rule the hour, *seemed* to wield unchecked dominion. The workings of these choice spirits were patent upon the face of society; and the modest, unobtrusive, retiring men of worth and character (for there were many, perhaps a large majority of such) were almost lost sight of in the hurly-burly of those strange and shifting scenes.

Even in the professions were the same characteristics visible. Men dropped down into their places as from the clouds. Nobody knew who or what they were, except as they claimed, or as a surface view of their characteristics indicated. Instead of taking to the highway and magnanimously calling upon the wayfarer to stand and deliver, or to the fashionable larceny of credit without prospect or design of paying, some unscrupulous horse doctor would set up his sign as " Physician and Surgeon," and draw his lancet on you or fire at random a box of his pills into your bowells, with a vague chance of hitting some disease unknown to him, but with a better prospect of killing the patient whom, or whose administrator, he charged some ten dollars a trial for his marksmanship.

A superannuated justice of the peace or constable in one of the old states was metamorphosed into a lawyer; and though he knew not the distinction between a *fee tail* and a *female* would undertake to construe, offhand, a will involving all the subtleties of *uses and trust!* [24]

In such an unsettled state of things there is plenty of opportunity to observe strange incidents. Actual duels, cases of assault and battery, and well-known trials are but thinly veiled. Baldwin's own partner at law, Col. Bliss, sat for Blass, a minor character in *The Flush Times.* The incidents of his tales are negligible: practical jokes, ridicu-

[24] *Flush Times,* pp. 85–89.

lous escapes, rascally shifts. Some of the sketches are nothing but anecdotes of legal wit long forgotten.

But what a world of merriment and plenty he sets before our eyes. What eating and drinking! Fires boom and crackle on the hearths, tables are piled high. When Squire A. prepares to eat fritters:

"He ordered a soup-plate and filled it half full of molasses — tucked up his sleeves — brought the public towel from the roller in the porch and fixed it before him at the neck," and then didn't get one fritter.[25]

Ned Ellet, the raw-boned constable, "weighed about two hundred pounds net — clothes, liquor, beard and all, about three hundred."[26]

And the practical jokes have a frontier simplicity and roughness. A gourmet from Kentucky is flattered into telling yarns while the young men eat all the three barrels of oysters. A horsetrader is beaten at his own game; Sam Hele terrifies a Yankee schoolmistress with tales of tar and feathers; a bully is put to shame by a mock duel.

What art there is in the telling of the tales is unconscious. Baldwin is full of long digressions. His introductions often take up more space than the story. His central setting is nine times out of ten the courtroom. It is the incidental anecdote which is told with economy and effect. His purpose is really to record the age of litigation rather than to recount events. He sports with setting or character sketch for several pages before going into action, then drops to pages more of conclusion.

In the very middle of a long exposition of the traits of Ovid Bolus, Esq., liar, spendthrift, and rascal, is a single paragraph:[27]

One thing in Ovid I can never forgive. This was his coming it over poor Ben. I don't object to it on the score of the swindle.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 143. [26] *Ibid.*, p. 148. [27] *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 11.

That was to have been expected. But swindling Ben was degrading the dignity of the art. True, it illustrated the universality of his science, but it lowered it to a beggarly process of mean deception. It was little better than crude larceny. A child could have done it: it had as well been done to a child. It was like catching a cow with a lariat, or setting a steel trap for a pet pig. True, Bolus had nearly practised out of custom. He had worn his art threadbare. Men, who could afford to be cheated, had all been worked up or scared away. Besides, Frost couldn't be put off. He talked of money in a most ominous connection with blood. The thing could be settled by a bill of exchange. Ben's name was unfortunately good — the amount some $1,600. Ben had a fine tract of land in S —— r (Sumter Co., Ala.). He has not got it now. Bolus only gave Ben one wrench, that was enough. Ben never breathed easy afterwards. All the V's and X's of ten years' hard practice went in that penfull of ink. . . . I can conceive of but one extenuation; Bolus was on the lift for Texas and the desire was natural to qualify himself for citizenship.

Rascals and jokers are the centers of Baldwin's interest in character. Other men are incidental, though often types well hit in passing. Bolus himself has a hint of the Big Bear. He is " a natural liar, just as some horses are natural pacers, and some dogs natural setters." [28] Major Foreman's " eyes stood out and were streaked like a boy's white alley — and he wore a ruffled shirt." [29] Was ever Dickens more felicitous?

Baldwin is the amateur story teller, the professional lawyer and historian. His talent and wit are carelessly displayed. Nevertheless his pictures of the era of inflation are faithful and valuable.

It will be seen that the conventions of Southern humor in the forties held for accurate observation and fresh material rather than technique. Piquancy was rather to be desired than form. A long step forward was taken when Johnson J. Hooper [30] centered his representation of

[28] *Flush Times,* p. 3. [29] *Ibid.,* p. 66.

[30] Johnson Joseph Hooper (1815–1863), was born in North Caro-

the semi-civilized age of speculation in a single character, Simon Suggs.

The *Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs* is a campaign biography. In a year or two the captain may be running for office, so it is well to get his name before the public. His history must be revealed.

It is an absolute, political necessity. His enemies *will* know enough to attack; his friends *must* know enough to defend. — Thus Jackson, Van Buren, Clay, and Polk have each a biography published while they live.[31]

The narrative of Simon's life begins with his preparations for migrating from Georgia to Alabama. When Simon was a boy of sixteen, his father, an old "hardshell" Baptist preacher, caught Simon and the negro boy Bill in a fence corner playing seven-up. The boys see him coming just in time to switch to a game of mumble-peg. But the old man picks up a dropped card and marches them off to the mulberry tree for chastisement. Bill gets a terrific "wallopin." When Simon's turn comes he tells his father that it is no use to whip him. He intends to play cards as long as he lives, and some day to make his living by it.

Old Mr. Suggs groaned, as he was wont to do in the pulpit, at this display of Simon's viciousness.

"Simon," said he, "you're a poor, ignunt creetur. You don't know nutin' and you've never b'en nowhars. If I was to turn you off, you'd starve in a week — ."

---

lina, and went in his youth to Alabama, where he was first lawyer, then editor. Simon Suggs appeared first in Hooper's paper, the *East Alabamian*, Lafayette, Ala. Selections were reprinted in the *Spirit of the Times*. Hooper edited a number of newspapers, the most important of which was the *Montgomery Mail*, to which he gave a national reputation. At his death he was secretary to the Senate of the Southern Confederacy.

[31] *Some Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs*, p. 8.

"I wish you'd try me," said Simon, "and jist see. I'd win more money in a week than you can make in a year. There ain't nobody round here kin make seed corn off o' me at cards. I'm rale smart." [32]

Half by boasting, half by cleverly laid baits to curiosity, Simon entices his father into a game. As for a bet on the cards — "Me bet!" thundered old Mr. Suggs.

I didn't go to say *that* daddy; that warn't what I meant adzactly. I went to say that ef you'd let me off from this here maulin' you owe me, and *give me* "Bunch" ef I cut Jack, I'd *give you* all this here silver, ef I didn't — that's all. To be sure I alers knowed *you* wouldn't bet.[33]

The bet is laid on these terms. Simon palms the cards, cuts the Jack, escapes a licking and wins Bunch, the pony. Early the next morning he slips down, puts a thimbleful of gunpowder into his mother's pipe, and rides away.

After twenty mysteriously unexplained years he turns up, "snugly settled on public land on the Tallapoosa River, in the midst of that highly respectable town of Indians known as the Oakfuskees." He is pursuing a varied career as speculator and gambler, following his favorite aphorism, "IT IS GOOD TO BE SHIFTY IN A NEW COUNTRY." [34] He is now a soft-spoken, foul-mouthed, skinny gentleman, with an ever-present sneer on his face and an all-too-ready tear in his eye.

Many are his schemes and plentiful the silver he rakes in. He gets one hundred and seventy dollars and a good horse for not filing on a piece of land which he does not want, twenty dollars more from a politician who mistakes him for a venal member of the state legislature, and again several hundred by impersonating a wealthy Kentucky hog buyer.

[32] *Some Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs*, p. 21.
[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 25.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Simon does not rush into deceit. "What's a man without his inteegerty?"[35] But if mistakes come he knows how to make the most of them. If the ring of speculators who are trying to buy the land of the Big Widow, his squaw friend, assume that Simon has his saddlebags crammed full of coins, they must pay for their misapprehension. He will let them know the pouches contain only rocks and old iron — after he has pocketed their five hundred dollars.

Simon won his captaincy at the Creek War. When the alarm was sounded the little town on the Tallapoosa was in a panic. "Will any of the breethring lend me a horse?" asked the Reverend Snufflenosy, wildly, as he bounded out of the pulpit.[36] Furniture, bedding, and tomcats were piled on wagons and hauled to the nearest crossroads store. Simon was on hand. His eloquence saved the day.

The village was in a quandary.

"We shall be skelped," cried the Widow Haycock, "and our truck all burnt up and destr'yed! What shall we do?"

"That's the question," remarked Simon, as he stooped to draw a glass of whiskey from a barrel of that article — the only thing on sale in the "store" — "that's the question. Now as for you women-folks" — here Suggs dropped a lump of brown sugar in his whiskey, and began to stir it with his finger, looking intently in the tumbler, the while — "as for our women-folks, it's plain enough what *you*'ve got to do" — here Simon tasted the liquor and added a little more sugar —"plain-*enough!* You've only got to look to the Lord and hold your jaws; for that's all you *kin* do! But what's the 'sponsible *men*'" — taking his finger out of the tumbler, and drawing it through his mouth — "of this crowd to do? The inemy will be down upon us right away, and before morning" — Simon drank half the whiskey — "blood will flow like" — the Captain was bothered for a simile, and looked around the room for one, but finding none, continued — "like all the world" — an idea suggested itself — "and the Tallapussey river! It'll pour out," he continued, as his fancy got rightly to work, "like a great guljin ocean! — d — d if it don't." And then

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 41. [36] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Simon swallowed the rest of the whiskey, threw the tumbler down, and looked around to observe the effect of this brilliant exordium.

The effect was tremendous! . . .[37]

"My apinion," continued Simon, as he stooped to draw another tumbler of whiskey; "my apinion, folks, is this here. We ought to form a company right away, and make some man capting that ain't afeard to fight — mind what I say, now — *that-aint-afeard-to-fight!* — some, sober, stiddy feller" — here he sipped a little from the tumbler . . . "and more'n all, a man that's acquainted with the country and the ways of the Injuns!" Having thus spoken, Suggs drank off the rest of the whiskey, threw himself into a military attitude, and awaited a reply.

"Suggs is the man," shouted twenty voices.[38]

And so Suggs is made "capting of the Tallapoosy Volluntares," otherwise known as the "Forty Thieves." The band does noble service during the Creek War, for it succeeds in frightening an old woman half to death, and in running off at least thirty Indian ponies. On the conclusion of the uprising "Capting" Suggs retires with a proud title and a military record. Suggs next gets "convarted" at a camp-meeting. He also gets the collection-box.

A year or two afterwards the piety has worn off. He is arraigned before a jury for playing poker. Simon would have received a heavy sentence, but a note is handed in to the courtroom which causes him to weep bitterly. His two boys are dying. The judge is impressed by his grief.

"I'll plead guilty," sobs Simon. "The boys will be dead afore I could get home anyhow! Let 'em send me to jail whar there won't be anybody to laugh at my misery."[39]

Of course the judge gives an order for his release. An hour later the prosecuting attorney finds him standing in front of a tavern in great glee, relating some laughable anecdote. Why is he not on the way home?

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[39] *Ibid.*, p. 138.

"You see," quoth Simon, "it was this here way adzactly — that note I got in the court-house, was one Dr. Jourdan sent me last summer, when the boys *was* sick, and I was on a spree over to Sockapatoy — only I didn't know it was the same. It must 'a drapped outen my pocket here, somehow, and some of these cussed town boys picked it up, tore off the date at the bottom, and sent it to me up thar — which, my feelins was never hurt as bad before."[40]

The picaresque biography closes with an appeal to the public:

Men of Tallapoosa, we have done! Suggs is before you! We have endeavored to give the prominent events of his life with accuracy and impartiality. If you deem that he has "done the state some service," remember that he seeks the Sheriffalty of your county. He waxes old. He needs an office, the emoluments of which shall be sufficient to enable him to relax his intellectual exertions. His military services, his numerous family, and his long residence among you, his gray hairs — all plead for him! Remember him at the polls.[41]

The political satire in Simon Suggs is slight, but effective. It is the more interesting because of the dearth of Southern political satires. Thomas Cooper's *Memoirs of a Nullifier,*[42] Kennedy's *Quodlibet,*[43] and John Beauchamp Jones's *Adventures of Colonel Gracchus Vanderbomb*[44] are all that can be counted. In the last two the aspersions are too cautious to be convincing. The brief observations on current politics in Hooper's *Simon Suggs,* Thompson's *Major Jones's Travels,* and Bagby's *Letters of Mozis Addums* are

[40] *Ibid.,* p. 140.

[41] *Ibid.,* p. 148.

[42] Cooper, Thomas, *Memoirs of a Nullifier,* 1832.

[43] Kennedy, J. P., *Quodlibet,* 1840.

[44] Jones, J. B., *Adventures of Colonel Gracchus Vanderbomb,* 1852.

only passing criticisms. Satire on Southern affairs assumed no importance until The Cause was lost.

The contrast between Simon Suggs and Jack Downing and Sam Slick illustrates the difference between the popular conceptions of the comic Southerner and the comic Yankee. The interest in Simon is founded upon his actions, not his point of view. He is far more vulgar than his Yankee prototypes. His " cuteness " is frequently not the invention of a scheme, but the turning to account of an unforeseen circumstance. He is, if it may be said, an individualist who has no interest in public affairs except as they may affect his own pocketbook. The advantage is on Hooper's side, however, when one considers the local color and historical background. The Creek Indian camps, the protracted meeting, the border faro den, are new material. Simon's adventures are not the stereotyped Yankee tricks. He has no wooden nutmegs to sell. But neither has he the wit of Sam Slick. His humor is too often mere profanity.

With Simon we leave the back country. The Georgia of Major Jones and the Tennessee of Sut Lovingood are well settled states, with railroads and large cities. Among their more inaccessible mountains and mud roads, however, are left a people still rustic, still ignorant, and provincial. It is a less brutal, less rascally, less venturesome life that they lead.

Though Major Joseph Jones is a contemporary of Simon Suggs, he has none of the coarseness and moral obliquity which characterizes the " Capting." Although William Tappan Thompson,[45] Jones's creator, was born in the West-

[45] William Tappan Thompson (1812–1882) was born at Ravenna, O., the first white child born in the Western Reserve. After his father died, he went to work as a boy of eleven, on the Philadelphia *Chronicle*. At twenty-three he was secretary to James D. Webster, afterwards Governor of the territory of Florida. He studied law under Webster, and went to Augusta, Ga., to practice. Here he

ern Reserve, he managed to acquire an affectionate understanding of his Southern fellow-countryman. The Major is a rough, unsophisticated, straightforward, honest Georgia lad. His homespun affections are fixed on Miss Mary Stallins, " the darlinest gall in the country." He courts her at the family fireside, beside a " lightered chunk." He sees her home from church on a Sunday. The " catasterfy " of the afternoon comes when he gallantly " shins up " a sweet gum tree to get Miss Mary a bunch of fox grapes. Like many another boy, his acrobatics before his sweetheart result in a fall into a muddy pool below. Again Major Joseph takes his rival Cousin Pete on a coon hunt which turns out badly for Pete. He quarrels with Miss Mary about a city feller, and makes it up at a candy-pulling. By this time he is almost ready to pop the question. On Christmas eve he goes to call on Mary Stallins.

The galls kep laughin' an' blushin'.

" Never mind," ses Miss Mary, " Majer's got to give me a Crismus gift . . . won't you, Majer? "

" Oh, yes," ses I; " you know I promised you one."

" But I didn't mean *that*," ses she.

" I've got one for you, what I want you to keep all your life, but it would take a two bushel bag to hold it," ses I.

---

was for a time with Longstreet, co-editor of the *States Rights Sentinel*. He went to the Seminole War. On his return he became editor of the Augusta *Mirror*, the first purely literary paper in Georgia. In 1840 he took charge of the *Miscellany* (Madison, Ga.), in which the Major Jones letters were published. The *Mirror* was a failure, and was merged with the Macon *Family Companion*, with Thompson as editor. In 1845 he became co-editor with Park Benjamin of the Baltimore *Western Continent*. In 1850 he founded the *Morning News* of Savannah, Ga., which he edited successfully for more than thirty years. From 1861 to 1865 he served as aide-de-camp to Governor Brown of Georgia. After this military interruption he continued to edit the *Morning News* until his death in 1882.

" Oh, that's the kind," ses she.

" But will you promise to keep it as long as you live? " ses I. . . . " Monstrous 'finement nowadays, . . . old people don't know nothin' about perliteness," said old Miss Stallins, jest gwine to sleep with her nittin' in her lap.

" Now you hear that, Miss Carline," ses I. " She ses she'll keep it all her life."

" Yes, I will," ses Miss Mary; " but what is it? "

" Never mind," ses I; " you hang up a bag big enough to hold it; and you'll find out what it is, when you see it in the mornin'." . . .

I sot up till midnight, and when they was all gone to bed I went softly into the back gate, and went up to the porch, and thar, shore enough, was a great big meal-bag hangin' to the jice. It was monstrous unhandy to git to it, but I was termined not to back out. So I got some chairs on top of a bench, and got hold of the rope; and let myself down into the bag; but jest as I was gittin' in, it swung agin the chairs, and down they went with a terrible racket; but nobody didn't wake up but Miss Stallinses old cur dog, and here he come rippin' and tearin' through the yard like rath, and round and round he went, tryin' to find what was the matter. I scrooch'd down in the bag and didn't breathe louder nor a kitten, for fear he'd find me out, and after a while he quit barkin'.

The wind begun to blow bominable cold, and the old bag kep turnin' round and swingin' so it made me seasick as the mischief. I was afraid to move for fear the rope would break and let me fall, and there I sot with my teeth rattlin' like I had an ager. It seemed like it would never come daylight, and I do believe if I didn't love Miss Mary so powerful I would froze to death; for my heart was the only spot that felt warm, and it didn't beat more'n two licks a minit, only when I thought how she would be surprised in the mornin', and then it went in a canter. . . . I couldn't tell when daylight was breakin', only by the chickens crowin', and I was monstrous glad to hear 'em, for if I'd had to stay ther one hour more, I don't believe I'd ever get out of that bag alive.

Old Miss Stallins come out fust, and as soon as she seed the bag, ses she, —

" What upon yeath has Joseph went and put in that bag for

Mary? I'll lay it's a yearlin' or some live animal, or Bruin wouldn't bark at it so."

She went in to call the galls, and I sot thar, shiverin' all over so I couldn't hardly speak if I tried to, . . . but I didn't say nothin'. Bimeby they all come running out on the porch.

"My goodness! what is it?" ses Miss Mary.

"Oh, it's alive!" ses Miss Kesiah. "I seed it move."

"Call Cato, and make him cut the rope," ses Miss Carline, "and let's see what it is. Come here, Cato, and git this bag down."

"Don't hurt it for the world," ses Miss Mary.

Cato untied the rope that was round the jice, and let the bag down easy on the floor, an' I tumbled out, all covered with corn meal from head to foot.

"Goodness gracious!" ses Miss Mary, "if it ain't the Majer himself!"

"Yes," ses I, "and you know you promised to keep my Crismus present as long as you live."

The galls laughed themselves almost to death, and went to brushin' off the meal as fast as they could, sayin' they was gwine to hang that bag up every Crismus till they got husbands too. Miss Mary — bless her bright eyes! — she blushed as beautiful as a morning-glory and sed she'd stick to her word. . . . I tell you what, it was worth hangin' in a meal-bag from one Crismus to another to feel as happy as I have ever since.[46]

Two months later the Major is still more elated:

I am too happy, and no mistake; the twenty-second of February is over, and the "consumation so devotedly to be wished for" is tuck place. In other words, I's a married man! ![47]

The Major's letters appeared in Thompson's paper, the Madison (Ga.) *Miscellany*. *Major Jones's Courtship* was published in 1840. Cary and Hart of Philadelphia brought out in 1843 a second series, *Major Jones's Chronicles of Pineville*, and in 1848 another account of the Major's ad-

[46] *Major Jones' Courtship*, pp. 89–92 (Letter XII).
[47] *Ibid.*, p. 107 (Letter XVI).

ventures, *Major Jones's Sketches of Travel.* The *Chronicles of Pineville* was still in print in 1880. *Major Jones's Travels* was in print in 1893.

For homely entertainment without a sting in it, it is hard to find the equal of Major Jones' courtship. Nothing much happens in these unadorned tales. There are no exaggerated heroics, no hairbreadth escapes, no tricksters tricked. The Joneses and the Stallinses are not odd characters, but unpolished country folk. The Major, though he will " chaw terbacker " has no other horrid vice. He is not a butt, nor a terrible example. The moderation and restraint of the letters make for a fine simplicity. Events and characters are not so much observed as felt and recreated.

A more debased example of the country boy is found in *Sut Lovingood's Yarns.*[48] It would be interesting to contrast the romantic tales of Miss Murfree with these racy anecdotes of the Tennessee Mountains. The uncouth Sut is the first well-developed example of the bad boy, of whom hints may be found in Longstreet, Hooper, and Thompson. He is always up to tricks, always in scrapes, and pretty coarse ones at that. There is an extravagance about his stories which just passes discretion. None the less, they are still current, in Indiana at least. In my childhood I have more than once been embarrassed by the tale of Sut

[48] George Washington Harris, 1814–1869, author of *Sut Lovingood's Yarns,* was born in Alleghany City, Pa. At the age of four he moved with his parents to Knoxville, Tenn., where he lived for most of his life. As a boy he made models of river steamers. He was set to learn the silversmith's trade, but instead of following that, became a river steamboat captain. In 1843 he contributed to the New York *Spirit of the Times* a series of humorous stories signed S—l. In 1856 he was appointed postmaster of Knoxville, a position he filled for many years. *Sut Lovingood* was contributed to Nashville journals, 1858–1861. Harris also wrote political sketches for the newspapers.

Lovingood's bloody shirt. The book, alone among the volumes of this chapter, has never gone out of print. Any one who reads it will recognize Sut's kinship with Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. In fact, Mark Twain's indebtedness to Southwestern humor has never been fully acknowledged. It is an interesting coincidence that the author of *Sut Lovingood's Yarns* was an old steamboat man.

A distinguished editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger* is responsible for the last upcountry man of the old South. Dr. George William Bagby [49] of Richmond, Virginia, printed the *Letters of Mozis Addums to Billy Ivvens* in the *Southern Literary Messenger* of 1858. Brief as they are, the letters are of some interest. Dr. Bagby seems to have been one of the first to rediscover the fact that unrestrained bad spelling is successful fun-making. Mozis Addums makes a trip to Washington to patent a perpetual motion machine. He has various unfortunate experiences at the hands of Washingtonians, from whom he is saved by an Irish servant girl, whom he afterwards marries. Like *Major Jones's Travels* the *Letters of Mozis Addums* contain considerable satire on urban life, and much entertaining information about the capital city as it was just before the civil war. Mozis's comments on his urban surroundings have a certain imaginative quality. He has the yokel's astonishment to excess.

> Billy, I kin not fergit the hour I entered Richmun. It were the all-fired, the owdashus, and tremenjus noise that skeer'd me. May be you've heerd two Injuns hollerin at wunst. You've heerd the wind bellerin in the woods lake a bull travlin to a cuppen thoo a bresh pile, and peepul shoutin at camp meetin and 'lectshuns, and crows holdin uv a debatin sciety in the evenin. You've hearn them things. Also you've knode the devil to git into the fowils, and the turkees git to gobblin, and the geese to cack-

[49] See King, Joseph R., *George William Bagby* (in preparation).

lin, and the Ginny chickins to havin uv the hiccups all the same time, hard as they kin slave. Well, jest imagin all them noises tangled up like a fishin line and comin right slap into yo' nakid ear when you didn't pretent to ixpec it. Taint nuthin, taint beginnin to be nuthin cumpared with what I heerd when the car stopt in Richmun.

On the whole, Mozis Addums does not add much to our conception of Southern comedy. We do not know enough about him. Had we a perspective of his native background, his earlier and later adventures, we might feel more than a superficial amusement at his jaunts. It is a pity Dr. Bagby did not enlarge his picture or give us a deeper insight into its lights and shades.

The humor of the old South, whatever we may think of it, however we may ignore it, was plentiful. In its own time it was enjoyed, and not only by Americans. Thackeray admired Simon Suggs, and is known to have greatly appreciated Baldwin's *Flush Times*. Dickens adapted John Basil Lamar's *The Blacksmith of the Mountain Pass* for his own story of *Colonel Quagg's Conversion*.

It has been questioned whether this mass of material had any permanent effect on American literature. Certainly it evolved no newly-refined narrative technique. Its free and easy movement is followed by Mark Twain. Its convention of a framework which introduces the rustic narrator in person was adopted by Joel Chandler Harris in his presentation of Uncle Remus. (Compare the introductions of *The Big Bear of Arkansaw, Bob Herring,* and *Tom Owen the Bee-Hunter,* and *Sut Lovingood's Yarns* with those of *Nights with Uncle Remus.*) It originated the American bad boy, and the Southern poor white.

The native material of Southern humorous writing ran to exaggerated presentation of far-fetched yarns and eccentric personalities. It never degenerated into conventional rep-

resentation of stock types. The originality and close observation shown in a wide variety of scenes and people are astonishing. Not one tenth of this body of material has been worked up, or worn out by later writers.

That there did emerge from this haphazard accumulation a popular conception of the comic Southerner cannot be denied. The roughspoken, voluble, independent individual who shambles through the pages of George Harris and Bagby and Hooper is very real. His speech has an indigenous flavor and a racy tang. If it lacks the aphorisms of Sam Slick, it is also free from the monotonous affectations of the stage Yankee. His jeans-clad figure is not as sharply defined as his Down-East cousin's. But one does not expect him to be conventional and repetitious. His variability gives a freer hand to the creator of Bill Arp.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOUTHERN HUMOR AND SATIRE

BAGBY, GEORGE WILLIAM, 1828–1883. *Pseud.*, Moses Adams.

Original Letters of Mozis Addums to Billy Ivvins, by Dr. George W. Bagby. New and revised edition, with an introduction and notes. Richmond (Va.), 1878. Clemmett & Jones.

No copy of the original edition, published in Richmond in 1862, is known to exist.

King, J. R., *George William Bagby* (in preparation).

BALDWIN, JOSEPH GLOVER, 1815–1864.

The Flush Times of Alabama and Mississippi, a series of sketches. N. Y., 1853. D. Appleton & Co.

In six months after publication 20,000 copies had been sold.

BURKE, T. A., ed.

Polly Peaseblossom's Wedding; and Other Tales. Phila., c. 1851.

T. B. Peterson. (Library of humorous American works.) Contents: *Polly Peaseblossom's Wedding*, by John B. Lamar; *The Unclad Horseman*, by W. T. Thompson; *The Thimble Game*, by T. W. Land; *War's Yure Hoss?* by A. Missourian; *A Losing Game of Poker*, by T. A. Burke; *Mike Hooter's Bar Story* (attributed to T. B. Thorpe); *Electricity as a Temperance Agent*, by W. C. Richards; *McCracken's Experience*, by a Hoosier; *Bingo*, by R. M. Charlton; *How Sally Hooter got Snake-bit* (attributed to T. B. Thorpe); *The Experience of the Blacksmith of the Mountain Pass*, by J. B. Lamar; *Pertaters and Ternups*, by Spoondrift; *The Coon-hunt*, by W. T. Thompson; *Doing a Sheriff*, by T. A. Burke; *A Case of Supposition (anon.); The Amateur Ticket-vender, at the Varieties (anon.); The Telegraph in St. Louis (anon.)*; *Smoking a Grizzly*, by John S. Robb; *Where Joe Meriweather Went To (anon.); An Arkansas Original (anon.)*; *A Fearful Tale of the Mississippi*, by Falconbridge *(pseud.); A Frightful Adventure in Mississippi*, by The Turkey Runner; *Practical Jokes and Bad Whiskey (anon.); Mississippi Legislature (anon.); Shifting the Re-*

sponsibility, by J. J. Hooper; *How Mike Hooter Came Very Near Wolloping Arch Cooney* (attributed to T. B. Thorpe); *The First Piano in Northern Illinois* (*anon.*); *Printing a Horse* (*anon.*); *The Way Old Bill Went Off* (*anon.*); *A Sleep-walking Incident*, by an old Tennessee correspondent; *The Last Bloody Duel Fought in Ohio* (*anon.*); *Anecdotes of Western Travel* (*anon.*); *A Running Fight upon the Rackensack* (*anon.*).

Byrn, Marcus Lafayette. *Pseud.*, David Rattlehead, M.D.

The Adventures of Fudge Fumble, or the Love Scrapes of His Whole Life, by David Rattlehead, M.D. Phila., 1851. T. B. Peterson. (Library of humorous American works.)

The Life and Adventures of an Arkansaw Doctor, by David Rattlehead, M.D., *the Man of Scrapes*. Phila., 1851. Lippincott.

Rattlehead's Chronicles. Phila., 1852. Lippincott.

Rattlehead's Travels; or, the Recollections of a Backwoodsman. Phila., 1852. Lippincott, Grambo & Co.

The Repository of Wit and Humor. Selected and arranged by M. L. Byrn. Boston, 1853. J. P. Jewett & Co.

Vim and Venture of Bolivar Hornet, The Alabama Doctor. N. Y., 1886. The Coast City Pub. Co.

Cobb, Joseph Beckham. *Pseud.*, The Rambler.

Mississippi Scenes; or Sketches of Southern and Western Life and Adventures. Phila., 1851. A. Hart.

Cooper, Thomas, 1784–1836.

Memoirs of a Nullifier; Written by Himself. By a native of the South. Columbia, S. C. The Telescope Office.

Crockett, David, 1786–1836.

A Narrative of the Life of David Crockett. Written by himself. Phila., 1834. Carey & Hart.

Written to correct erroneous impressions produced by the *Sketches and Eccentricities* (1833). *Cf.* Preface.

An Account of Colonel Crockett's Tour to the North and Down East. Written by himself. Phila., 1835. Carey & Hart.

The Life of Martin Van Buren. Phila., 1835. R. Wright

Satirical campaign biography. Attributed to A. S. Clayton.

Colonel Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas. Phila., 1836. T. K. & P. G. Collins.

Pub. in London in 1857 by R. Kennett. Attributed to Richard Penn Smith.

Life of David Crockett. To which is added an account of his glorious death at the Alamo. Phila., 1855. Porter & Coates. Contains a condensation of the *Narrative of the Life of Crockett*, the *Tour to the North* and *Exploits in Texas.*

Abbott, J. S. C. David Crockett. 1874.

Ellis, E. S. *Life of Colonel David Crockett.* 1884. *Sketches and Eccentricities of Colonel David Crockett of West Tennessee.* 1833. (*anon.*)

Wright, Marcus J. *Colonel David Crockett of Tennessee* (*Magazine of American History,* vol. 19, pp. 484–489. 1883. Contains Crockett's only poem.)

Field, Joseph M., 1810–1856. *Pseuds.,* Everpoint, Straws.

The Drama in Pokerville . . . and other stories. Phila., 185–. (Pref., 1847.) T. B. Peterson. (Library of humorous American works.)

Harris, George Washington, 1814–1869. *Pseud.,* S——l.

Sut Lovingood. Yarns spun by a "Natural born durn'd fool." Warped and wove for public wear. N. Y., 1867. Dick & Fitzgerald.

Contributed to Nashville journals, 1858–1861.

Hooper, Johnson Jones, 1815–1862.

Some Adventures of Captain Simon Suggs, Late of the Tallapoosa Volunteers . . . by a Country Editor. Phila., 1845. Carey & Hart.

What political satire there is is addressed to the presidential campaign methods of James K. Polk.

Widow Rugby's Husband. Phila., 1851. A. Hart.

Jones, John Beauchamp

Adventures of Col. Gracchus Vanderbomb (of Slough Creek) in Pursuit of the Presidency. Phila., 1852. A. Hart. (Library of humorous American works.)

Kennedy, John Pendleton, 1795–1870.

Quodlibet; Containing some annals thereof. Edited by Solomon Second Thoughts, Schoolmaster. Phila., 1840.

A satire on the methods which resulted in the election of William Henry Harrison to the presidency.

L., H. C., of Mississippi. *Pseud.*, Madison Tenzas.

The Louisiana Swamp Doctor, by Madison Tenzas, M.D., author of *Cupping on the Sternum.* Phila., 1856. (c. 1843.) T. B. Peterson. (Library of humorous American works.)

Longstreet, Augustus Baldwin, 1790–1870. *Pseuds.*, Hall, Baldwin.

Georgia Scenes, Characters, Incidents, etc., in the First Half Century of the Republic. By a native Georgian. Augusta, Ga., 1835. Printed at the *S. R. Sentinel* office.

This edition and the one issued by Harper in 1840 are not signed. The Harper edition of 1846 is signed by Longstreet. Wade, John H. *Augustus Baldwin Longstreet,* 1924.

Montesano, B. R., *pseud.*

Redstick, or, Scenes in the South. Cincinnati, O., 1856. U. P. James. Preface signed D. C.

Porter, William Trotter, 1809–1858, ed.

The Big Bear of Arkansas, and Other Tales, Illustrative of Characters and Incidents in the South and Southwest. N. Y., 1845. Carey & Hart. Library of humorous American works.

Contents: *The Big Bear of Arkansas,* by T. B. Thorpe, Esq.; *Jones' Fight,* a story of Kentucky, by an Alabamian; *The Great Kalamazoo Hunt,* a story of Michigan (*anon.*); *That Big Dog Fight at Myers',* by a Mississippian; *How Simon Suggs "Raised Jack,"* a story of Georgia (by J. J. Hooper); *Swallowing an Oyster Alive,* a story of Illinois (by John S. Robb); *A "Texas Joker" in a Tight Place,* a story of that 'ilk (*anon.*); *Billy Warwick's Courtship and Wedding,* a story of the Old North State (*anon.*); *A Bully Boat and a Brag Captain,* by Sol Smith; *A Swim for a Bear,* a story of Mississippi, by the Turkey Runner; *Letter from Billy Patterson to Himself* (*anon.*); *Who Hit Billy Patterson?* (*anon.*); *Chunkey's Fight with a Panther,* by the Turkey Runner; a thrilling hunting adventure in Mississippi (*anon.*); *A Yankee Who Couldn't Talk Spanish,* by John A. Stuart, Esq.; *Old Sense of Arkansas,* by "N" of that 'ilk; *Stoke Stout of Louisiana on the Way to Kill Wild Turkeys and Rheumatism* (*anon.*); *Hoss Allen of Mississippi* (*anon.*);

Pulling Teeth in Mississippi, by Uncle Johnny; *Cousin Sally Dillard* (by Hamilton C. Jones); *A Legal Sketch of the Old North State; Anecdotes of the Arkansas Bar* (*anon.*).

A Quarter Race in Kentucky and Other Sketches. Phila., 1846. Carey & Hart. (Library of humorous American works.)

Reissued as *Colonel Thorpe's Scenes in Arkansaw.*

Contents: *A Quarter Race in Kentucky* (by Pete Whetstone, *pseud.*); *A Shark Story,* by J. Cypress, Jr. (W. P. Hawes); *Lanty Oliphant in Court,* by Maj. Kelly; *Billy Morse on the City Taxes,* by Baggs; *The Fastest Funeral on Record,* by F. A. Durivage; *Going to Bed before a Young Lady,* by Judge Douglass; *A Millerite Miracle,* by C. A. P.; *Old Singletree,* by Robert Patterson; *Running a Saw on a French Gentleman,* by Ginsangandson; *Breaking a Bank,* by Sol Smith; *Taking the Census,* by J. J. Hooper; *Dick Harlan's Tennessee Frolic,* by S——l (G. W. Harris); *Falling Off a Log* (*anon.*); *The Weary, Fast Crab* (*anon.*); *French Without a Master,* by Straws (J. M. Field); *A Rollicking Dragoon Officer,* by The Man in the Swamp; *The Georgia Major in Court* (*anon.*); *Uncle Billy Brown-Glorious, by Ramber* (J. B. Cobb); *Old Tuttle's Last Quarter Race,* by Buckeye; *Bill Dean the Texan Ranger,* by G. W. Kendall; *The Steamboat Captain Who Was Averse to Racing,* by The Young 'Un; *Bob Herring, the Arkansas Bear Hunter,* by T. B. Thorpe; *McAlpin's,* by the author of *Cousin Sally Dillard* (H. C. Jones); *India Rubber Pills,* by Cheval; *A Murder Case in Mississippi* (*anon.*); *Kicking a Yankee,* by J. M. Field; *A Down-East Original,* by De Nogby; *Somebody in My Bed,* by S. J. Jones; *A Day at Sol Slice's,* by Nat Slocum; *Cupping on the Sternum,* by H. C. L.; *A Bear Story,* by W. P. Hawes; *Playing Poker in Arkansas* (*anon.*).

Brinley, Francis. *Life of William T. Porter.* N. Y., 1860. D. Appleton.

Robb, John S. *Pseud.,* Solitaire.

Streaks of Squatter Life. Phila., 1843. Carey & Hart. (Library of humorous American works.)

Reissued in 1858 as *Western Scenes, or Life on the Prairie.*

Taliaferro, H. E. *Pseud.,* Skitt.

Fisher's River (*North Carolina*) *Scenes and Characters.* By Skitt, who has "been thar." N. Y., 1859. Harper.

THOMPSON, WILLIAM TAPPAN, 1812–1882. *Pseud.*, Major Joseph Jones.

Major Jones's Courtship. Phila., 1840.

Major Jones's Chronicles of Pineville. Phila., 1843. Carey & Hart. (Library of humorous American works.)
Reissued as *Major Jones's Scenes in Georgia.*

Major Jones's Sketches of Travel. Phila., 1848. A. Hart. (Library of humorous American works.)

Major Jones's Courtship; or, Adventures of a Christmas Eve. A domestic comedy in two acts, by Major Joseph Jones. Savannah, Ga., 1850. E. J. Purse.

THORPE, THOMAS BANGS, 1815–1878. *Pseud.*, Tom Owen, the Bee-Hunter.

The Mysteries of the Backwoods. Phila., 1846. Carey & Hart.

The Hive of the Bee-hunter. N. Y., 1854. D. Appleton.
Omits three and adds ten sketches to the contents of *The Mysteries of the Backwoods.*

Tom Owen der Bienen Jäger und anderen Geschicten aus dem Südwesten von T. B. Thorpe. Aus dem Englischen übertragen von W. F. Drugulin. 2 *band in* 2. Leipzig, 1856. C. E. Kollman.
Complete translation of *The Hive of the Bee-hunter.*

WHARTON, GEORGE M. *Pseud.*, Stahl.

The Portfolio of a Southern Medical Student. Phila., n.d. Lippincott, Grambo & Co.
Reprinted, 1872, by Claxton, Remsen & Heffelfinger, Philadelphia.

New Orleans Sketch Book, by "Stahl," author of the *Portfolio of a Southern Medical Student.* Phila., c. 1843. Peterson. (Library of humorous American works.)

CHAPTER V

CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTIONS: BILL ARP AND P. V. NASBY

The ten years between 1860 and 1870 was for America a period of the strangest suspicions and prejudices, the narrowest intolerance, the grossest misinterpretation of motives and distortion of facts; a period of military occupation and guerilla warfare, of monstrous charges and impossible beliefs, of fear and hunger and profiteering, of assassinations and lynchings, judicial murder and death on the field of battle. Devils stalked abroad in those days. Morgan raided Ohio and Indiana and Kentucky; Sherman laid waste Georgia and South Carolina. Lincoln was shot, Jefferson Davis imprisoned, Andrew Johnson impeached. Negroes and carpetbaggers sat in legislative halls. Ku Kluxers rode by night. Monitors bombarded ports and long gray privateers slipped in and out of harbors. Disloyal Northerners fled to Canada. Copperheads exchanged secret passwords. Negroes carried painted pegs to mark off the forty acres they expected from Uncle Sam. Northern politicians thundered forth their *Carthago delenda est* against the impoverished South. States were made and unmade and made again in the battles between President and Congress. It was an incredible period.

In a time of such immoderate mental and physical contentions the hypnotic influence of partisan spirit may insensibly lead the most earnest and Godfearing citizen to attempt the enforcement of narrowly intolerant measures.

It is not surprising that the political critics of the day should share in the vindictive animosity of the majority of men. The malignant virulence of some of the Northern satirists of the period is unsurpassed in any other part of our history. Petroleum V. Nasby in the person of a Copperhead addresses Lincoln as "Goriller." Orpheus C. Kerr ridicules the magnanimity of Grant's terms of surrender at Appomattox. Lowell, the suave diplomat and benign college professor, represents Jefferson Davis as a tyrannical scoundrel, and urges the harsh repression of the conquered South. With all this mud-slinging, it is a relief to find in the few political utterances of Artemus Ward, and in the letters of Bill Arp, satires that are apt without being malicious.

The voice of Bill Arp, the Georgia cracker, was first heard in the South in April, 1861. He was the creation of a lawyer of Rome, Georgia. Charles Henry Smith (1826–1903), the author of the letters of Bill Arp, so-called, was the son of a Massachusetts father and a South Carolinian mother. He was born in Gwinnett county, Georgia. "'Bill Arp' grew up with all the other town boys and was about as bad."[1] He spent three years at the University of Georgia, then known as Franklin College, in Athens, Georgia, but was forced to leave college in his senior year because of his father's serious illness. He studied law, and was admitted to the bar in three months. "In 1851 he took the Western fever, and moved to Rome (Ga.) to grow up with the town and country."[2] Here he practiced law for the next ten years. In July, 1861, Major Smith was placed on the staff of General Bartow of the Army of Northern Virginia. On account of failing health, he was

[1] Smith, C. H., *Bill Arp's Scrap Book*, 1884. Preface, p. iii.

[2] *Library of Southern Literature*, 14 vols., 1907–1910; v. XI, p. 4885.

appointed by Jefferson Davis to judiciary duty in Macon, Georgia, where he organized and administered a military court for trying prisoners charged with treason to the Confederacy. In 1865 he was elected to the State Senate of Georgia. In December, 1865, he resumed the practice of law in Rome. In 1877 he removed to "Fontainebleau," his plantation five miles from Cartersville, Georgia. He left the country in 1888 to live in Cartersville, where he spent the remainder of his life.

His earliest *Letters from Bill Arp* were published in a Rome newspaper, *The Southern Confederacy.* After the war he continued to send these letters for more than thirty years to the Atlanta (Ga.) *Constitution. Bill Arp, So-Called, A Side Show of the Southern Side of the War,* was published in 1866. It was followed by *Bill Arp's Letters* (1868), *Bill Arp's Peace Papers* (1873), *Bill Arp's Scrap Book* (1884), and *The Farm and Fireside* (1892). All of the later volumes reprint some of the wartime letters, but each adds many essays hitherto unpublished.

The first letter from Bill Arp to Abe Linkhorn was written late in April, 1861, probably shortly after the taking of Harper's Ferry on April 18th. When he had written the letter, Mr. Smith showed it to a couple of his friends. As he was standing on the street corner reading it to them, the real Bill Arp, the town wag, stopped to listen.

"Squire," said he, "are you gwine to print that?" "I reckon I will, Bill," said I. "What name are you gwine to put to it?" said he. "I don't know yet," said I. "I haven't thought about a name." Then he brightened up and said, "Well, Squire, I wish you would put mine, for them's my sentiments." [3]

The "sentiments" of this first letter reflect Southern

[3] Smith, C. H., *Bill Arp's Scrap Book,* 1884, p. 8.

indignation and pride at the outbreak of the war. President Lincoln's proclamation after the firing on Sumter had amazed and enraged the folk below Mason and Dixon's line. To the majority party in the South the result of the election of 1860 had been in itself a declaration of war. The Republican party was sure to nullify those safeguards of state sovereignty, the Dred Scott Decision, the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Compromise of 1850. Politically the North was in their minds the aggressor. From a military standpoint they had already a well-deserved prestige on account of the evacuation of Sumter and the taking of Harper's Ferry. Economically the cotton kingdom, they believed, held the industrial North in the hollow of its hand. The Southern Confederacy would soon be recognized by Victoria and by Napoleon III. Its victory in the internecine warfare would be immediate and overwhelming. How dare the insignificant railsplitter command them as rebels to lay down their arms and disperse within twenty days!

These are the sentiments voiced by the Middle Georgia farmer, Bill Arp, in his first letter to Abe Linkhorn: [4]

Rome, Ga., Aprile, 1861.

Mr. Linkhorn — Sur: These are to inform you that we are all well and hope these lines may find you in *statue ko*. We received your proklamation, and as you have put us on very short notis, a few of us boys have conkluded to write you and ax for a little more time. The fact is, we are most obleeged to have a few more days, for the way things are happening, it is utterly onpossible for us to disperse in twenty days. Old Virginy and

[4] In the first published volume, *Bill Arp, So-called* (1866), the letters are carefully corrected for misspelling and grammar. For this reason where two versions were available, I have quoted from the later, uncorrected editions. The selection above is from *Bill Arp's Peace Papers*, 1873, p. 19–22. It may also be found revised in *Bill Arp, So-called,* pp. 21–23.

Tennessee, and North Carolina,[5] are continually aggravatin us into tumults, and carousements, and a body can't disperse until you put a stop to sich onruly condukt on their part. I tried my darndest yisterday to disperse and retire, but it was no go; and besides, your marshal here ain't doing a darned thing — he don't read the riot act, nor remonstrate, nor nothing, and ought to be turned out. . . .

The fact is, the boys round here want watchin, or they'll take sumthin. A few days ago I hear they surrounded two of our best citizens, because they was named Fort and Sumter. Most of em are so hot that they fairly siz when you pour water on em, and thats the way they make up their military companies here now — when a man applies to jine the volunteers they sprinkel him, and if he sizzes they take him, and if he don't they don't. . . .

I'm afraid your Government is givin you and your kangaroo a great deal of onnecessary trubbul, and my humble advice is, if things don't work better soon, you'd better grease, or trade the darned old thing off. I'll show you a slite-of-hand trick that would change the whole concern into buttons quick. If you don't trade or do sumthin with it soon, it will spile or die on your hands, sertain.

Give my respekts to Bill Seward and the other members of the kangaroo. What's Hannibal [5a] doin? I don't hear anything from him nowadays.

Yours, with care,
Bill Arp

P. S. — If you can possibly xtend that order to thirty days, do so. We have sent you a CHECK at Harper's Ferry (who keeps that darned old ferry now? its giving us a heap of trubble), but if you positively won't xtend, we'll send you a chek drawn by Jeff Davis, Borygard endorses, payable on sight anywhere.

Yours, B. A.

In January, 1862, Bill Arp writes a second letter.[6] The rebels have not yet succeeded in capitulating.

[5] Virginia and North Carolina had not yet seceded in April.

[5a] Hannibal Hamlin, Vice-President of the United States.

[6] *Bill Arp's Peace Papers,* pp. 23–26. Also in *Bill Arp, So-called,* pp. 21–23.

Mr. Abe Linkhorn, sur, the spring hav shed its fragrance, the summer is over and gone, the yaller leaves of autum hav kivered the ground, old winter is slobberin his froth on the yearth, but we hav not been able to disperse as yet. Me and the boys started last May to see you pussonally, and ax for an xtension of your brief furlo, but we got on a bust in old Virginny, about the 21st of Jewly, and like to have got run over, by a passel of fellers runnin from Bull Run to your city. Arter that we tried to gitt to you by the Potomak River, but Mr. Whiting said you were not runnin that Masheen *at these presents*. We next went to Mr. Harper's Ferry, to take the Baltimore Railrode, but we couldn't find the konduktor, and kars seemed skase, and foaks sed you were not runnin that masheen *much*. . . . After that we kum back, and thought we would get captain Wilkes to ship us over, but Mr. Bennet sent us word that the captain had quit a seafarin life. Mr. Seward made him quit to pacify an old English Bull that was bellerin about and pawin dirt in the air. Mr. Linkhorn, sur, if that Bull is of the same stock as the one of your foaks seed here in Jewly, he is a dangerous shore, and will have a bad effek on your populashun. You had better surcumscribe him before he hurts somebody.

Almost a year later Bill is inspired to write to Mr. Linkhorn a third time.[7] News of the Emancipation Proclamation has reached the South.

December 2, 1862.

Mr. Linkhorn,

Sur: A poet hav sed that "Time ontied waiteth for no man." To my opinyun it are ontied now and hastenen on to that eventful period which you have fixed, when Africa is to be unshakled, when Niggerdom ar to feel the power of your proklamation, when Uncle Tom are to change his base, and evakuate his kabin, when all the emblems of darkness are to rush frantikally forth into the arms of their deliverers, and with perfumed and sented gratitude embrace your exsellency,

[7] *Bill Arp's Peace Papers*, pp. 27–30. Also in *Bill Arp, So-called*, pp. 24–26.

and Madam Harriet Beechers toe. What a galorious day that ar to be! What a sublime ery in history! What a proud kulmination and konsumation and koruskation of your politikul hoaps. . . .

But alas for human folly — alas for all subloonary things — our peepul will not believe, these krazy Rebels will not konsider! Christmas is already cum — only one more breef weak to slide away before we must part, forever part, with all our nigger heritage, and yet our stubborn peepul continue to buy em and sell em, and the shorter the lease, the hier the price they are payin. What infatyashun. I verily believe they will keep up their old ways until next Wednesday night, just as tho they dident hav to giv em all up the next mornin after breakfast. . . .

I would like to see you pussonally, Mr. Linkhorn, and hear you talk and tell some of your funny antydotes, like you told Governor Morehead. I laffed when I read em tell the teers fairly rained from my eyelids. I know I could make my fortune, Mr. Linkhorn, compilin your wit. Mayn't I be your Boswell, and follow you about?

Later in the same month of December, 1862, Bill sends his fourth and last letter[8] to the President:

Mr. Linkhorn,

Sur: Are it not possible that you are usin too much proklamation. More than 8teen months ago you published an edik, orderin the boys to retire and be peasable, but they disretired and went to fightin. The effek was bad, very bad. Now you have proklimated the niggers free after Ginerwary, and I am afeered it will prove a fee simple for all time.

Every nigger will git in the kotton patch now, shore; for the tarnal rebels do everything by kontrarys. Niggers have riz twenty per cent, and are growin more darker and blacker every day. A big plantation now looks like the sun were in eklips. . . .

Mr. Linkhorn, sur, our peepul git more stubbern every day. They go mighty nigh naked, and say they are savin their Sunday clothes to wear after we have whipped you. They just

[8] *Bill Arp's Peace Papers,* pp. 31–34. Also in *Bill Arp, So-called,* pp. 27–30.

glory in livin on half rashuns and stewin salt out of their smoke house dirt. They say they had rather fight you than feed you, and swear by the ghost of Calhoun they will eat roots and drink branch water the balance of the time before they will kernowly to your abolition dyenasty. Chickahominy! what a job you have undertook! . . .

Mr. Linkhorn, sur, your Genruls don't travel the right road to Richmond, nohow. The way they hav been tryin to cum is through a mity Longstreet, over two powerful Hills, and across a tremendious Stonewall. It would be safer and cheaper for em to go round by the Rocky Mountings, if spending time in military xcursions is their chief objek.

But I must klose this breef epistle. I feel very gloomy, Mr. Linkhorn, about this destruktive war, and hav no heart to write much. As Genrul Byron said, at the Battle of Waterloo, " I ain't now what I used to was, and my sperits are flutterin, faint and low."

Yours, til deth,
Bill Arp.

This is irony without malice. It rallies on the sister states to victory. It taunts the adversary without base aspersions. It ridicules the President and his generals without descending to personal vituperation. For unsullied patriotism it is matched only by Artemus Ward's interview with Jefferson Davis.

Artemus, the itinerant showman, has been among the Seseshers, who have confiscated his show, and put him in durans vial. At last he gets an interview with Jefferson Davis.[9]

" Wall, wall, Mister Ward! " says Davis, " you air at liberty to depart; you air frendly to the South, I know. Even now we hav many frens in the North, who sympathise with us, and won't mingle with this fight."

" J. Davis, there's your grate mistaik. Many of us was your sincere frends, and thought certin parties amung us was fussin about you and meddlin with your consarns intirely too much.

[9] Browne, C. F., Artemus Ward, His Book. 1862. pp. 195, 196.

But J. Davis, the minit you fire a gun at the piece of dry goods called the Star Spangled Banner, the North gits up and rises en massy, in defence of that banner. Not agin you as individooals — not agin the South even — but to save the flag. We should indeed be weak in the knees, unsound in the heart, milkwhite in the liver and soft in the hed, if we stood quietly by and saw this gloryus Govyment smashed to pieces, either by a furrin or a intestine foe. The gentle-harted mother hates to take her naughty child across her knee, but she knows it is her dooty to do it. So we shall hate to whip the naughty South, but we must do it if you don't make back tracks at onct, and we shall wallup you out of your boots! J. Davis, it is my decided opinion that the Sonny South is makin a egrejus mutton-hed of herself."

Both Artemus Ward and Bill Arp have the Lord on their side. Neither one, however, would accuse the adversary of enlisting the Devil. This magnanimity deserves credit.

Not content with his appeals to Abe Lincoln, Bill Arp goes on commenting on Southern affairs in war time. He reflects on militia-men and potash-makers. He ruminates on the suspension of habeas corpus, and the currency bill. He joins in the flight before Sherman's army, and returns to view the scene of devastation. He has many doleful thoughts on the fluctuations of Confederate money.

Bill's philosophizing on tax dodgers reminds one of Robert Thomas's little homilies. He has a keen eye for the weakness of human nature.[10]

Folks are not reliable. If one is so occasionally, it is an exception. He is looked upon as a curiosity, and his remarkable conduct gets in the papers, and is narrated and narrated about as an extraordinary circumstance. If he pays up his old debts that are gone out of date, it is considered a sort of miracle, and goes dodging around for a heap more than it's worth — more than likely he broke at first and got rich at last by tricking and trapping and dodging around. If I could see him give in

[10] *Bill Arp, So-called,* pp. 73, 74.

his taxes, and didn't smell perjury, he could stand fire and smoke. Old Diogenes might blow out his candle and hunt for an honest man no more. There's the time and the place and the circumstance that tries a man's soul. Just watch him and study him as he gives in his taxes — see the flinching and squirming and dodging around, for this here anno domini 1863 is powerful hard on the root of all evil. There's the city tax, and the county tax, and State tax, and Confederate tax, and general tax, and special tax, and church tax, and charity tax, and tax in kind and tax unkind, and shoe tax, and salt tax, and speculator's tax in general; and they scourge a man hard; and they scourge him frequent, and poor human nature caves in. . . .

There's Snooks, who didn't give in his young niggers, because he said they were no profit to him. Old Shirk wouldn't give in his notes because the stay law wouldn't let him collect 'em, and they might prove insolvent before they were paid. Old Dodge gave his money to his wife a few days before the first day of April. Old Grab has been sued for his niggers, and now won't give 'em in because the case ain't determined. Old Gitall bought his salt at twenty-five cents, and won't give it in any more becaus he ain't sold it, and it might go down. Old Crib cuts down his corn about half, for he makes allowance for rotage, ratage, shrinkage, draggage, lossage, and stealage. Old Hook's land is worth a cool hundred thousand, but he returns it at thirty, because he says it don't make any more truck than it used to. And there's all mankind in general who are twisting and shirking, and giving in their property at a heap too little for fear of making it a little too much. Gee whilikens, Juba; what a fortune I could make by buying folks' property at their own valuation; what a power of perjury is to be tried or confessed on the other side of Jordan; what a criminal docket; what a power of travelling of those sultry, sulphry regions where shade trees don't grow, and ther ain't no chance to be dodging around!

If Bill Arp has one outstanding characteristic, it is pluck. He has all the dogged courage of the isolated small farmer. His firmness is well shown in the letters of 1865.[11]

[11] *Peace Papers,* pp. 104, 105. *Bill Arp, So-called,* pp. 114, 115.

February, 1865.

My doktrin hav always bin that if we was to fite and fite and fite till our army was played out, the biggist part of the Yanky job would be just begun. After they hav whipped us, then they hav to subjugate us. They hav got to hold us down, and they can't do it. . . . Now the idee of the Yanks takin possesshun of so many towns and syttys, and so much terrytory, and holdin it and keepin so many people down, is nonsense and it can't be did. Besides, we ain't whipped — not by three or four jug fulls. Spose Sherman did walk rite thru the State. Spose he did. Was eny body whipped? Didn't the rebellyun just klose rite up behind him, like shettin a pair of waful irons? He parted the atmosphere as he went along and it kollapsed agin in his reer immegitly. He'll have to go over that old ground sevrul times yet, and then sell out and move away.

Even in the face of defeat the same bulldog spirit is with him. Later in the year he writes his famous letter to Artemus Ward: [12]

Rome, Ga., September 1, 1865.

Mr. Artemus Ward, Showman,

Sur: The reesun I write to you in pertikler is bekaus you are about the only man I know in all "God's kountry," *so called*. For sum sevrul weeks I have been wantin to say sumthin. For sum sevrul years we Rebs, *so called*, but now late of said kountry deceased, hav been tryin mity hard to do sumthin. We didn't quite do it, and now it is very paneful, I ashoor you, to dry up all of a sudden, and make out like we wasn't there.

My frend, I want to say sumthin. I spose there is no law agin thinkin, but thinkin don't help me. It don't let down my thermomyter. I must xplode myself genrully so as to feel better. You see I am tryin to harmonise. I'm tryin to soften down my feelins. I'm endeverin to subjergate myself to the level of surroundin sircumstances, *so called*. But I can't do it till I am allowed to say sumthin. I want to quarrel with sumbody and then make frends. I ain't no giant killer. I ain't no Norwegun bar. I ain't no Bo Konstrikter, but I'll be hornswoggled if the talkin,

[12] *Peace Papers*, pp. 109–112. *Bill Arp, So-called*, pp. 132–135.

and the writin and the slanderin hav got to be all done on one side eny longer. Sum of your foaks hav got to dry up or turn our foaks loose. It's a blamed outrage, *so called*. . . .

But *I'm* a good Union man, *so called*. I ain't a gwine to fite anymore. *I* shan't vote for the next war. *I* ain't no gurilla. I've dun tuk the oath, and I'm gwine to keep it, but as for my bein subjergated and humilyated, and amalgamated and enervated, as Mr. Chase says, it ain't so — nary time. I ain't ashamed of nuthin, neather — ain't repentin — ain't axin for no one hoss, short-winded pardin. Nobody needn't be aplayin preest about me. I ain't got no twenty thousand dollars.[13] Wish I had; I'd give it to these poor widders and orfins. I'd fatten my own numerous and interestin offspring in about two minits and a haf. They shouldn't eat roots and drink branch water no longer. Poor unfortinate things. To cum into this subloonary world at sich a time. Ther's Bull Run Arp, ther's Harper's Ferry Arp, ther's Chickahominy Arp, that's never seed the pikturs in a spelling book. I tell you, my frend, we are the poorest peepul on the face of the yearth — but we are poor and proud. We made a bully fite, selah, and the whole Amerikan nation ought to feel proud of it. It shows what Amerikans can do when they think they are imposed on — "*so called*." . . . We had good men, grate men, kristyun men, who thot we was right, and many of them hav gone to the undiskivered kountry, and hav got a pardin as is a pardin. When I die I am mighty willin to risk myself under the shadder of their wings, whether the klimate is hot or cold. Selah.

If the tone of this letter seems a bit sharp, it must be remembered that many of the leaders of the war were suffering imprisonment; that the right of suffrage was denied to all commissioned officers of the Confederate army and navy and to everyone who had held any civil position under its government higher than that of justice of the peace; that others must take an ironclad test oath before casting a vote. Furthermore, Georgia had borne a heavy

[13] According to the Amnesty Proclamation of May 29, 1865, any man possessed of property worth $20,000 was not permitted to take the oath of allegiance and so was denied the right to vote.

burden. She had sent to the field 120,000 soldiers. Her war loss amounted to three-fourths of her wealth. One-fourth of her railway tracks were destroyed, two thousand square miles of her territory had been ravaged, and she was left with a public debt of twenty-five millions of dollars.[14] It is a brave thing to smile in the face of such disasters. The Louisville (Ky.) *Courier Journal* said of the letter to Artemus Ward: "It was the first chirp of any bird after the surrender, and gave relief and hope to thousands of drooping hearts."[15]

It would be interesting to the student of history to compare this letter with Lowell's *Speech to the Cabbage Heads in March Meeting*,[16] where he urges the extreme Republican policy of suppression of the conquered South, and closes with a specious appeal from the spirits of dead Union soldiers for the abandonment of mistaken kindness to the vanquished.

Bill Arp has a rough and tumble directness. He works himself into a passion of honest indignation in spite of his efforts at self control. He carries his head high, but it is not full of narrow bitterness. Like his frontiersmen forefathers he is the honest, rough cracker, who bears the hardships of "this subloonary world" without whining.

Charles H. Smith's characterization of the poor white lacks the extravagance and the wit of Lowell's masterpieces, Hosea and B. Sawin. Smith invents no scrapes for his hero. He uses a simple accusation, instead of the roundabout understatement of the Yankee. He may not produce an artistic or finished result, but his creature is

[14] Oberholzer, E. P., *A History of the U. S. Since the Civil War*, vols. 1 and 2, 1917–1922; vol. 1, p. 27.

[15] Rutherford, M. L., *South in History and Literature*, 1906, pp. 390, 391.

[16] *Biglow Papers*, second series, no. XI.

racy and realistic. Although Bill Arp is a sectional type, with a well understood literary tradition, he is none the less highly original. His expositions of the opinions of the common man convince by their sincere unconventionality.

Bill's family and friends are as clear a series of little portraits as those in the *Major Jones's Letters.* Mrs. Arp rules her husband and spoils her children, cooks her dinner and hates the Yankees. Children and negroes work and play, go coon-hunting, and drop corn in the furrow. Big John, the former melishy man, Happy George and his wife Jenny Ann, Jim Allcorn, and the boastful Ike Mackey, are agreeable neighbors. Rural life, even after the war, has compensations for its hardships. And Bill, though he sometimes pretends to be melancholy, takes things philosophically. Every now and then he lets fall a wise observation:

Hard work is the best antidote for grumbling.[17]
Dont run in the old ruts too long.[18]
The modern boy is entirely too bigity.[19]
It looks like everything is born to trouble, especially sheep.[20]
What is to be, will be, whether it happens or no.[21]
Settled habits, if they are good ones, are like settled religion. There is a power of comfort in 'em and a man is not happy if he makes a change.[22]
A Southerner don't care much for a dime, but a Yank will get rich off of coppers.[23]
A family that sleep late will always be behind with farm work.[24]

As his sectional pride simmers down, Bill Arp's letters become more idyllic. *Smoking the Pipe of Peace* [25] is an epitome of the joys and sorrows of the simple life.

[17] *Bill Arp's Scrap Book,* 1884, p. 66.
[18] *Ibid.,* p. 67.
[19] *Ibid.,* p. 79.
[20] *Ibid.,* p. 81.
[21] *Ibid.,* p. 354.
[22] *Ibid.,* p. 228.
[23] *Ibid.,* p. 288.
[24] *Ibid.,* p. 227.
[25] *Ibid.,* pp. 72–75.

I love to meet a nabor and hear him say, "How's craps?" I continue to like farmin. I like it better and better, exsep that the wheat is sumwhat doubtful about making a crap. A little long bug with a tail at both eends has got in the joints and sucked the sap out, and it's fallin down in patches. Looks like there is always sumthin preyin on sumthin, nuthin is safe in this subloonary world. Flies and bugs and rust prey on the green wheat. Weevils eat it up whin its cut and put away. Rats eat the corn — moles eat the gubbers — hawks eat the chickens — the minks killed three of our ducks in one night — cholera kills the hogs — and the other night one of my nabor's mules cum along with the blind staggers and fell up a pair of seven steps right into my front gate and died without kickin. Then there is briars and nettles and tread safts and smartweed and pison oak and Spanish needles and cuckle burrs and dog fennel and snakes that's always in the way on a farm and must be looked after keerfully, especially snakes, which are my eternal horror, and I shall always believe are sum kin to the devil himself. I can't tolerate such long insects. But we farmers hav to take the bad with the good, and there is no more good than bad with me up to the present time. . . .

There's no monotony upon the farm. There's something new every day, and the changing work brings into action every muscle in the human frame. We plow and sow and harrow and hoe, and gather it in at harvest time. We look after the horses and cows, and pigs and sows, and the rams and the lambs, and the chickens and the turkeys and geese. We cut our own wood, and raise our own bread and meat, and don't have to be stingy with it like city folks. . . .

It's a great comfort to me to set in my piazzer these pleasant evenings and look over the farm, and smoke the pipe of peace and ruminate. Ruminate upon the rise and fall of empires and parties and presidents and preachers. . . .

I may be mistaken, but it seems to me a little higher grade of happiness to look out upon the green fields of wheat and the leafing trees and the blue mountains in the distance and hear the dove cooing to her mate, and the whippoorwill sing a welcome to the night and hunt bubby blossoms with the children, and make whistles for 'em and hear 'em blow, and see 'em get after a jumpin' frog or a garter snake, and hunt hens' nest and paddle in the branch and get dirty and wet all over, and watch their

penitent and subdued expression, when they go home, as Mrs. Arp looks at them with amazement and exclaims, "Mercy on me; did ever a poor mother have such a set! Will I ever get done making clothes? Put these on right clean this morning, and not another clean rag in the house. Go get me a switch, right straight, go! I will not stand it." But she will stand it, and they know it — especially if I remark, "Yes, they ought to be whipped." That saves 'em, and by the time the switch comes the tempest is over, and some dry clothes are found, and if there is any cake in the house they get it. Blessed mother! fortunate children! What would they do without her? Why her very scolding is music in their tender ears. I'm thankful that there are some things that corner in the domestic circle that Wall Street cannot buy nor money kings depress.

Bill Arp, then, aside from his wartime satire, has much the same variety of appeal as Sam Slick. He is a keen-sighted observer of human affairs, an essayist, and a moralist. These attributes, added to his gift for characterization, and his important position as spokesman of Southern opinion, will in time win for him recognition as one of our notable philosopher-humorists.

None of the Northern satirists except Lowell reach Bill Arp's literary level. Only one other, Petroleum V. Nasby, attempts to portray the native man of the people, though his is a purposely distorted picture. Orpheus C. Kerr and Private Miles O'Reilly confine themselves to satirizing military types. They deserve some brief notice, for though ephemeral, their work was timely.

The Orpheus C. Kerr letters,[26] written by the New York journalist R. H. Newell,[27] present in burlesque the cam-

[26] Newell, R. A., *The Orpheus C. Kerr Papers,* 4 vols., 1862–1868.

[27] Robert Henry Newell (1836–1901) was born in New York City. From 1858–1862 he edited the New York *Mercury.* He was employed from 1869 to 1874 as a writer on the New York *World.* From 1874 to 1876 he was editor of *Hearth and Home,* a weekly journal. He died in 1901 at his home in Brooklyn. Besides *The Orpheus*

paigns of the United States army. The absurd adventures of the Mackerel brigade are written in a flamboyant newspaper style.[28]

These hands that once opened the oysters of peace and toyed with the bivalves of tranquility, are now sanguinary with the red juice of battle! (gushing idea!) and linger in horrid ecstacy about the gloomy neck of a bottle holding about a quart! Eagle of my country; proud bird of the menagerie! thou art avenged!

His eloquence sets off very well the comic soldiering of Captain William Brown Eskevire, High Private Samivel Green, Colonel Wobbles, Colonel Wobert Wobinson of the fat German cavalry from the West, Captain Bob Shorty and Sâmyule Sa-mith. In a typical grand battle:

The Man that puts his hair in papers was wounded severely on one of his corns, and the Brigadier-General slid hastily down from the tree, and retired to the rear of an adjacent barn. A consultation of officers was immediately called.[29]

His parody on the terms of peace offered by Grant[30] to Lee is perhaps his most interesting satirical effort:

Munchausen, Southern Confederacy:

Sur, — I propose to receive the surrender of the well-known Southern Confederacy on the following terms:

Fresh rolls for all the officers and men to be made at once, and the boots of the Southern Confederacy to be blacked by officers duly appointed by the United States of America. All the officers to give their individual pay rolls, that they may be cashed by the United States. Such public and private property as has been stolen by the well-known Southern Confederacy to be turned over to the police-officers appointed to take charge of it.

C. Kerr Papers, he was the author of several novels and volumes of poetry.

[28] *Orpheus C. Kerr Papers,* vol. I, p. 50.

[29] *Ibid.,* I, 52.

[30] *Ibid.,* III, 295.

Each officer will be permitted to retain both his arms and together with the men, is expected to return calmly to his family, and not commit assault upon the United States of American without due provacation.

THE GENERAL OF THE MACKEREL BRIGADE [31]

(Green Seal)

Meanwhile that vigorous Irish-American, Charles Graham Halpine,[32] was sending to the New York *Herald* from South Carolina, where he was aide to General David Hunter, letters containing the dialect rhymes of Private Miles O'Reilly.[33] Miles has a few escapades. He is put in the guard house for lampooning Ericsson's monitors. He appeals to the President, visits the White House, and is sent by the President on a secret peace mission to Jefferson Davis, from which he returns in great glory. His adventures, however, are a mere framework for the verses. These are sometimes as feeble as:

[31] This personage is at first intended for Gen. George B. McClellan. Later this *nom de guerre* is applied to any military leader whom the author wishes to satirize.

[32] C. G. Halpine (1829–1868) was the son of an Episcopal clergyman who was also editor of the Dublin *Evening Mail*, the most important Protestant journal of that city. The son was graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, in 1846. He became a journalist, was for a time in London, went to Boston, where he was assistant editor of the Boston *Post*. With B. P. Shillaber and Dr. Shepley he started the *Carpet-Bag*. When that short-lived periodical expired he made his way to New York. Here he established relations with several newspapers, was associate editor of the *Times*, then associate editor and part proprietor of the *Leader*, and contributed humorous rhymes to the *Tribune*. For his military services he was breveted Brigadier-General. After the war he was editor and proprietor of the *Citizen*, a reform newspaper, until his death in 1868 from an overdose of chloroform.

[33] *The Life and Adventures . . . of Private Miles O'Reilly*, 1864.

But in West and in East there's one "black coat" at least,
Around whom the army might gather.
"Uncle Abe," it is you, honest, kindly and true —
To us boys you have been as a father! [34]

At their best they are superficial, clever, full of a rollicking good humor. In a period which produced so many good war songs, and so much bad war verse, their relative merit is hard to estimate. For newspaper poetry their rank is high. Most of them are full of references to minor characters and obscure issues of the period. *Sambo's Right to Be Kilt,* which refers to the protests against General Hunter's enlistment of negro regiments, is one of the most comprehensible:

SAMBO'S RIGHT TO BE KILT [35]

Air — "The Low-backed Car."

Some tell us 'tis a burnin' shame
To make the naygers fight!
And that the thrade of bein' kilt
Belongs but to the white;

But as for me, upon my sowl!
So liberal are we here,
I'll let Sambo be murthered instead of myself
On every day in the year.

On every day in the year, boys
And in every hour of the day;
The right to be kilt I'll divide wid him,
And divil a word I'll say. . . .

So hear me all, boys darlin',
Don't think I'm tippin' you chaff,
The right to be kilt we'll divide wid him,
And give him the largest half.

[34] *Ibid.,* p. 188. [35] *Ibid.,* pp. 55, 56.

Private Miles himself is a premature offshot. The Irish vote had not at that time achieved its present power and notoriety. He amused, but could have no serious influence. As the predecessor of Mr. Dooley of Archey Road, he points the way to a new development of American satire.

Like Miles O'Reilly and Orpheus C. Kerr, Petroleum Volcano Nasby was the creation of a newspaper. David Ross Locke (1833–1888), author of the *Nasby Papers*, was born in Broome county, New York, of a father who had been a staunch antislavery man as far back as 1830, an organizer of the Liberty party, and one of the first to join the Republican party when it was founded in 1854. The son came honestly by his aversion to Copperheads and Rebels. As a young man he augmented his scanty common school education through his opportunities of seeing life as strolling printer and reporter. After experiences as local reporter on several Western papers, he wound up in northwestern Ohio, at that time one of the strongholds of Republicanism. In northern Ohio he was from 1852 to 1860 successively editor and publisher of the Plymouth *Advertiser*, the Mansfield *Herald*, the Bucyrus *Journal* and the Findlay *Jeffersonian*. In the *Jeffersonian* he published in 1860 the first letter from Rev. P. V. Nasby. Soon after, when Locke became editor and publisher of the *Toledo Blade*, the series was transferred to that paper. "No writer ever achieved popularity more quickly. The letters were published in all the Northern papers, were as eagerly expected as news of the battles, and universally read by the Federal soldiers."[36] Locke continued the Nasby series throughout the reconstruction period. In 1871 he removed to New York City, though he still kept his Toledo interests. He became for a time the managing editor of the

[36] *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, vol. II, p. 158.

New York *Evening Mail*. After some years he returned to Ohio to spend his last days.

The Nasby letters were published and republished. The *Nasby Papers* (1864) were followed by *Divers Views, Opinions and Prophecies of Yoors Truly* (1866), *Andy's Trip to the West* (1866), *Swinging Round the Cirkle* (1867), *Ekkoes from Kentucky* (1867), and *The Impendin Crisis uv the Democracy* (1868). In 1871 a selection of the Nasby letters, *The Struggles (Social, Financial and Political) of Petroleum V. Nasby*, was brought out in Boston with a highly complimentary introduction by Charles Sumner.

Sumner said in part:

> Beyond the interest in these letters as another instance of a peculiar literature — illustrated by Major Jack Downing, Sam Slick and the genius of Hosea Biglow — they have an historic character from the part they performed in the war with slavery, and in advancing reconstruction. Appearing with a certain regularity, and enjoying an extensive circulation, they became a constant and welcome ally. Unquestionably they were among the influences and agencies by which disloyalty in all its forms was exposed, and public opinion assured on the right side. It it impossible to measure their value. Against the devices of slavery and its supporters, each letter was like a speech, or one of those songs which stir the people.[37]

Abraham Lincoln sent a message of appreciation to the author. On March 18, 1865, the newly inaugurated President remarked to Sumner, "For the genius to write these things I would gladly give up my office.[38] More than one witness has testified to Uncle Abe's fondness for reading Nasby's letters aloud.[39] He kept Sumner listening to them

[37] Locke, D. R., *The Struggles . . . of Petroleum V. Nasby*, 1871, pp. 13, 14.

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[39] See Locke, D. R., *The Nasby Letters*. Toledo, Ohio. The Toledo Blade Company, 1893, pp. 3–6.

for over twenty minutes, while more than thirty persons, among them senators and representatives, were waiting in the outside office.[40]

I wonder who reads and enjoys them now, outside of students of American history and literature. Certainly they are excellent campaign material. Their misrepresentations are full of coarse humor. They are as funny as they are vindictive.

Nasby, like Birdofredum Sawin, impersonates the Northern man who supports the South. He is an even more vulgar and unprincipled rascal. His irreverent parodies on the psalms pass the bounds of good taste. The philosopher-satirist must often by sly self-revelation reveal the petty meannesses of the common people. Jack Downing, Sam Slick, and B. F. Sawin had employed this means of satirical comment. But the device must not be overworked. Locke gave to Nasby and his Southern friends not one redeeming trait. The postmaster of Confedrit X Roads is the blackest of self-seeking villains. From beginning to end he is a finished hypocrite. Lowell avoided exaggeration of character by leading Birdofredum on a downhill path to rascality. Locke's deliberate blackening of the Northern Democrat must be understood, or the intent of many of the episodes of his narrative, such as the interview with President Lincoln, will be misinterpreted.

Nevertheless, Nasby is irresistibly amusing. His insolence, his plausible deceits and laughable mishaps, and his preposterous proposals for adjustment of national affairs are assiduously funny. His career must be followed to be appreciated.

In his first letter to the Findlay *Jeffersonian* of March 21, 1861, Nasby reports that Wingert's Corners has seceded

[40] Locke, D. R., *The Struggles . . . of Petroleum V. Nasby,* 1871, p. 15.

from the state of Ohio. South Carolina has left the Union, and "Wingert's Corners, ez trooly Dimecratic ez any uv em, hez follered soot." He gives a long list of town grievances, a parody on the *Ordinances of the Secession.* This, like many of the earlier letters, is full of references to the local politics and chief citizens of Findlay.

On August 6, 1862, Nasby explains why he should not be drafted. He is baldheaded, knock-kneed, and has many of the lesser afflictions of man. He runs away to Canada to avoid forcible enlistment, but unfortunately slips back over the line, and is caught in October.

> I am here, clad in the garb of slavery! Nasby, clothed in a bobtailed bloo coat, a woolin shirt, and bloo pants, with a Oysteran musket in his hands, a going thro the exercise! Good hevings! wat a spectacle! [41]

Nasby is sent South, and promptly deserts to the Confederate army. From the camp of the Looisiana Pelicans he writes:

> I have reseevd more letters from frends in my wunst happy but now distracted home than I kin anser separately. I shel do it all to-wunst, thus:
>
> John M. — Shoemakin wood be a splendid biznis here, only ther aint no leather. Practice haff-solin with straw before you start. . . .
>
> P. N. — Ther is a good openin for a Watchmaker here. I am the only mechanic in this section uv Mississippy. I fixt the Kernel's watch yisterday — forged a mane-spring out uv a bayonet, and for a chane used a fiddle-string. It don't jest keep time, but ez it ticks, it ansers to bet on poker. Fetch sum lard ile; tar won't work on watches, even in this warm climate.
>
> Amos — The success uv our Guvment is shoor. Finance hez trubbled us, but our Sekretary uv the Treasury hez bought 2 fast printin-presses and a lot uv paper on tick, and we now get all we want.[42]

[41] *Struggles,* p. 53.

[42] *The Nasby Papers,* 1864, p. 19.

Nasby's military experiences are summarized in his own words:

> Twict doorin the fratrisidle struggle which drencht this happy land in goar, I wuz drafted into a service . . . twict, I say, I was pulled into the servis, and twict I wuz forced to desert to the Dimocrisy uv the South, rather than fite agin em. . . . Finally the thumb uv my left hand wuz acksidentally shot off, owin to my foot becomin entangled into the lock uv my gun, wich thumb wuz acksidentally across the muzzle thereof, and I wuz no longer liable to military dooty.[43]

In 1863 he returns to Wingert's Corners. He starts a newspaper, the *Marter and Tirent Resister,* and forms a Democratic church, of which he is the pastor. This church bears successively the names of the Church of St. Vallandygum, the Church of St. —— (Nov. 1, 1863), Church uv the Slawtered Innocents (Lait St. Vallandigum) (Dec. 11, 1863), and Church of the Noo Dispensashun, (Feb. 10, 1864).

In 1864 he retires to Saint's Rest ("wich is in Noo Jersey.") The next year finds him in "Confedrit X Roads," Kentucky. Andrew Johnson makes him postmaster of that village. Ousted by Grant, he flees to the Sixth Ward, New York City. He starts a grocery,[43a] but drinks up twenty-five per cent of his stock, and sells the balance on credit to Democrats. He returns in poverty to "Confedrit X Roads," "where, probably, I shel die." His adventures and opinions after 1871 do not concern us.

November 1, 1864, on a visit to Washington, Nasby interviews Lincoln:

> Interdoosin myself, I opened upon him delikitly, thus:
> "Linkin," sez I, "ez a Dimocrat, a free-born Dimocrat, who is prepared to die with neetnis and dispatch, and on short notis,

[43] *"Swingin Round the Cirkle,"* 1866, p. 8.

[43a] "Grocery" was in those days often a euphemism for "saloon."

fer the inalienable rights of free speech — knoin also that you er a goriller, a feindish ape, a thirster after blud, I speak." . . .

Anxshus to support yoo, we ask yoo to adopt the follerin triflin changis:

Restoar to us our habis corpusses, as good ez new. . . .

Repele the ojus confisticashen bill, which irrytates the Suthern mind and fires the Suthern hart. . . .

Do away with drafts and conskripshens. . . .

Revoak the Emansipashen proclamashen and give bonds that you'll never ishoo another.

To these and other suggestions the President responds that he will give "serious considerashen," and asks:

"Is there any littel thing I kin do fer you?"

"Nothin pertikler. I *wod* accept a small Post orifis, if sitooated within ezy range uv a distilry."[44]

The tone of this communication might profitably be contrasted with that of any one of Bill Arp's letters to Mr. Linkhorn. It may even be that the Northerner sometimes deserves the reputation for vulgarity so liberally conferred upon him by one of his Southern compatriots. Or is it that insulting epithets applied to Lincoln are received by modern ears as was Mark Twain's story of the tramps named Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Ralph Waldo Emerson by his horrified Boston audience? Certainly "feindish ape" is not a pleasant term of address.

Nasby frequently makes preposterous peace proposals. As frequently does he exercise himself in the "Apossel Biznis." The burlesque sermon and parody on Scripture was for a long time very popular. Old speakers usually contained at least one such selection. People of all ages and conditions cast their letters to intimate friends in Biblical phraseology and thought themselves very witty in so doing. The mock sermons of Dow, Jr., ran through

[44] *Nasby Papers*, 1864, p. 45.

several editions in this country and were reprinted in England.[45] This form of wit is not nowadays so much admired.

The return of Lincoln to the presidential chair did not seem at all sure in the summer of 1864. As the news came in that certain doubtful states had gone Republican, Nasby wrote:

Church uv the noo Dispensashun
October the 14th, 1864.

I've come to a conclooshen. I'm satisfied that Pennsilvanny, Ohio and Indiana hev gone ablishn. I saw it in a daily paper. Therefore, I direct that every church in my diocese be draped in mournin (the same we used when we heerd uv Atlanta will anser), and that the follerin sam uv angish be chantid at every servis until we git the returns from Noo Jersey.

Ohio! Pensilvany! Indiana!

Pennsilvany is cussed, Ohio is cusseder, but Indiana is cussidest.

Weep, O my people, for lo! the hind sites is knocked off us!

Gnash yer teeth, for the states we counted on the most heve gone the wust agin us.

Tear yer hair, fer Voorhees is beat.

Throw ashes on yer head, fer little Sam Cox is gone up.

Array yerself in shoddy, for we're all gone up. . . .

We are a dove, a peace dove, shoved out uv the political ark.

And the deluge uv Ablishnism rageth wildly, and shows no sign of subsidin.

And we are weary, but kin find no place to rest our foot.

Bestir thyself, O Lee! if yoo wood save us in November.

On yoo we bet our pile, yoo are our anker and our cheefest trust.[46]

Lincoln dies, and Nasby records his hypocritical grief. He applies for the postmastership of "Confedrit X Roads."

[45] Paige, Elbridge Gerry, *Short Patent Sermons by "Dow, Jr.,"* 1845; *Dow's Patent Sermons,* 4 vols., 1857; *Dow, Jr.'s Patent Sermons,* 3 vols., n.d. *William Jerdan's Yankee Humor and Uncle Sam's Fun,* London, 1853, is almost entirely composed of selected sermons by Dow, Jr.

[46] *Divers Opinions . . . of Petroleum V. Nasby,* 1865, pp. 235–237.

He continues to have dreams and visions, and to write psalms of lamentation and exultation as the battles rage between President Johnson and "Congres." He reports on the "Freedmen's Burow at Confedrit X Roads." He presides at the church trial of "Deekin Pegram, 'charged by Elder Slather with hevin, in broad daylite, with no attempt at concealment, drunk with a nigger, and a free nigger at that, in Bascom's grocery.'"[47] He receives his postmastership.

President Johnson invites Nasby to accompany him as chaplain on his tour to the grave of Stephen Douglas, known as the "Swing Round the Circle." The president on this tour made many indiscreet utterances, reports of which formed the basis of certain of the charges in the articles of his impeachment before Congress. The tour was not an entire success. In many cities the crowd called so loudly for General Grant, who was a member of the party, that President Johnson was unable to make himself heard. Nasby's diary recalls these incidents:

> Battle Creek, — A large number was assembled here, who ez the train stopped, yelled, "Grant! Grant!" Affected to tears by the warmth uv the reception, the President thanked em for this mark of confidence. Ef he ever hed any doubts ez to the people's being with him, these doubts wuz removed. He wood leave in their hands the flag and the Union uv 36 states, and the stars thereto appertaining. Ef he wuz a Joodis Iskariot who wuz —
>
> The crowd gave three hearty cheers for Grant ez the train moved off, to wich the Presidence responded by wavin his hat.[48]

Nasby returns to "Confedrit X Roads." He is the leader in a village jollification over the proposition of a general amnesty for the leaders of the Confederacy. The

[47] *Swingin Round the Cirkle,* 1866, p. 159.
[48] *Ibid.,* p. 216.

townsmen celebrate the occasion by burning the negro schoolhouse.

The Reverend Petroleum's next undertaking is the establishment of an institution of learning, "The Southern Classikle, Theologikle and Military Institoot uv Confedrit X Roads (wich is in the Stait uv Kentucky)."

> In the Theologikle Department speshl attenshun will be given to the highly nessary work uv preparin the stoodents for comin out strong on the holinis uv Slavery. . . .
>
> The morals uv the stoodents will be scroopulously looked after. No card-playin will be allowed before servis on Sunday, and none watever with the servants. They will be taught to respeck themselves.[49]

Nasby solicits funds for this institution, and absorbs them into his expense account. He lays the cornerstone, goes back at night, tips it over, and abstracts the five-dollar bill and the flask of whisky within. As the political power of Johnson wanes the name of the projected college is changed to "The Ham and Japheth Academy for the Development uv the Intellek uv all Races, irrespective of race or color." When Jefferson Davis is released from imprisonment Nasby invites him to become the President of the "Ham and Japheth Academy." No documents are known to exist regarding Mr. Davis's answer to this kind invitation.

Nasby next proposes a grand convention of the Democratic party to define its position on the negro question. Failing that, the "Fakulty of the H. and J. Academy" meet to revise the Scriptures. Among their amendations is:

> So God creatid a *white* man in his own image.

And so on. Nasby's projects are endless. They are always timely, often irreverent to the last degree, always

[49] *Ekkoes from Kentucky,* 1867, pp. 25, 26.

coarse, never stupid. One can see that they must have delighted the not over particular Republicans of their day.

His pictures of life at the South are designedly false. The Southerners among whom he lives, and whom he meets on his travels, are venal and vicious. They spend their time playing poker, drinking whisky, flogging negroes, burning schoolhouses, lynching, and engaging in other occupations equally shameful. His indictments of Southern character are mercilessly cruel.

Nasby is the lowest of the unlettered critics. He weakens the moral strength of the Republican cause by his cheap comments. Yet the age which produced him brought forth also the best of the philosopher-satirists in politics, Hosea Biglow, Birdofredum, and Bill Arp. This period is so far the high point of the common critic of national affairs. After reconstruction was completed, the native unlettered philosopher was for a time submerged in the flood of local color fiction.

For bibliographies see the "Cambridge History of American Literature," vol. II, pp. 503–511.

CHAPTER VI

THE FUNNY MEN: ARTEMUS WARD AND JOSH BILLINGS

The ways of the professional humorist were lively in the middle nineteenth century. Joke columns were an extremely popular feature of newspapers and periodicals. There was a large crew of fun-makers to be read and enjoyed in the years between 1850 and 1880. George Harris, William T. Thompson, Mr. Bagby, and C. H. Smith entertained their Southern audiences. George D. Prentice, John Phoenix,[1] Nasby, Mrs. Partington, Samantha Allen,[2] The Widow Bedott,[3] Private Miles O'Reilly, Hans Breitman, The Danbury News Man, and many others sent gales of merriment over the North and West. The Americans were digging for gold, they were staking out the Great Plains, they were quarrelling and fighting, they were building transcontinental railways, laying down the Atlantic Cable, swarming into cities, erecting huge industrial plants, and changing almost overnight from an aggregation of farmers and villagers into a nation of city dwellers and factory workers. And through it all they toiled and speculated and boodled and laughed, — great horse laughs, sardonic grunts, silly giggles, open-mouthed guffaws, sly chuckles.

Of the many men who kept them grinning, C. F. Browne and Henry Wheeler Shaw are best remembered. Both were fun-makers of a rare sort. They cracked jokes, sometimes inane, and sometimes vulgar. More than this, they

[1] George Horatio Derby. [2] Marietta Holley.
[3] Miriam Whitcher.

breathed through their drolleries the exhalations of inborn and original personality. They made along with their witticisms an interpretation of human nature as they saw it, and an arraignment of the foibles of man and the imperfections of the social order. And in Artemus Ward and Josh Billings, their assumed characters, they created literary personalities of undeniable virility. Long life to them!

Charles Farrar Browne (1834–1867) was born "away down East in the state of Maine." In Waterford, Me., the red-headed little harum-scarum grew and became a printer's apprentice. He romped through the pressrooms of the *Weekly Democrat* of Lancaster (N. H.), the Norway (Me.) *Advertiser,* and the Skowhegan (Me.) *Clarion.* Next, a man of fifteen, he was setting type for Shillaber and Halpine's *Carpet Bag,* in Boston. Like Franklin, he made his first contributions anonymously, and had the pleasure of seeing his secret offering accepted, and of setting it in type himself. He stayed with the publishers of the *Carpet Bag* for a long time, almost three years. Then he shook the fish scales and Charles River sand from his feet and headed for Ohio, with an old-fashioned gripsack and a composing-stick. The travelling printer hit Cincinnati, made Dayton, Springfield, Sandusky, and Tiffin. He strolled on to Toledo, where, on the Toledo *Commercial,* he rose from compositor to local editor. His witty paragraphs in the *Commercial* attracted attention throughout northern Ohio. He was invited to join the staff of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer.*

So, in 1857, this young man of twenty-three, with about nine years of professional experience behind him, went to Cleveland as city editor of what was then the foremost Democratic newspaper of Ohio. In this city he found congenial and slightly Bohemian society. He was given

a free hand in his editorial paragraphs, and his skits were applauded by a large and receptive audience. Nasby, his fellow-humorist, said: [4]

When A. Ward was in Cleveland he was the greatest man there. Nothing could be done without him. He was making his reputation then, although he commenced in Toledo, and eventually got to New York, and thence to London.

On January 30, 1858, the *Plain Dealer* printed the first letter from Artemus Ward,[5] the genial showman:

PITSBURG, Jan. 27, 18&58

THE PLANE DEALER:
SIR:

I write to no how about the show bisnis in Cleeveland i have a show consisting in part of a Calforny Bare two snakes tame foxies &c also waxworks my waxworks is hard to beat, all say they is life and nateral curiosities among my wax works is Our Saveyer Gen tayler and Docktor Webster in the ackt of killing Parkman. now mr. Editor scratch off few lines and tell me how is the show bisnis in your good city i shall have hanbils printed at your offis you scratch my back and i will scratch your back, also git up a grate blow in the paper about my show don't forgit the waxworks.

yours truly
ARTEMUS WARD
Pitsburg Penny

p S pitsburg is a 1 horse town. A.W.

This was combined with later letters to make *One of Mr. Ward's Business Letters*, the first selection in *Artemus Ward, His Book:* [6]

[4] From an interview with David Ross Locke in the Newark (N. J.) *Courier*, November 1871. Quoted in Hudson, Frederick, *Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872*, 1873, p. 694.

[5] Quoted in Seitz, Don C., *Artemus Ward*, p. 24.

[6] *Artemus Ward, His Book*, pp. 17–19.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE —

Sir — I'm movin along — slowly along — down tords your place. I want you should rite me a letter, sayin how is the show bisnis in your place. My show at present consists of three moral Bares, a Kangaroo (a amoozin little Raskal — t'would make you larf yerself to deth to see the little cuss jump up and squeal) wax figgers of G. Washington Gen Tayler John Bunyan Capt. Kidd and Dr. Webster in the act of killin Dr. Parkman, besides several miscellanyus moral wax statoots of celebrated piruts & murderers, &c., ekalled by few & exceld by none. Now Mr. Editor, scratch off a few lines sayin how is the show bisnis down to your place. I shall hav my hanbils dun at your offis. Depend upon it. I want you should git my hanbils up in flamin stile. Also git up a tremenjus excitement in yr. paper 'bowt my omparaleld Show. We must fetch the public sumhow. We must work on their feelins. Cum the moral on 'em strong. If it's a temprance community tell 'em I sined the pledge fifteen minits arter Ise born, but on the contery ef your people take their tods, say Mister Ward is as jenial a feller as we ever met, full of conwiviality, & the life an sole of the Soshul Bored. Take, don't you. If you say anythin abowt my show say my snaiks is as harmliss as the new born Babe. What a interestin study it is to see a zewoligical animil like a snaik under perfeck subjecshun! My kangaroo is the most larfable little cus I ever saw. All for 15 cents. I am anxyus to skewer your infloounce. I repeet in regard to them hanbills that I shall git 'em struck orf up to your printin office. My perlitical sentiments agree with yourn exackly. I know thay do becaws I never saw a man whoos didn't.

Respectively yures
A. WARD.

P.S. — You scratch my back & Ile scratch your back.

Charles F. Browne had found his vein. The itinerant showman is even now a familiar sight to the rural American. Though the one-ring circus is rare or extinct, still the medicine man exhibits his curiosities and sells his nostrums on the corner of Main and Pike Streets, and still the Cottonblossom Theatre, the New Sensation, and

the little scows with their clown and strong man tie up at the wharf-boats of the Mississippi and its tributaries.

Browne aimed at the presentation of a national, not a local type.

> The shrewdness of a Barnum was to be united with the stupidity of an uneducated intinerant exhibitor, who had gained his experience by roughing it in the West amongst the towns and villages of society where the more refined forms of amusement are comparatively unknown. The old showman was to have the smartness of a Yankee, combined with the slowness of one whose time had been chiefly spent among the backwoods; he was to blend humorous stupidity with unscrupulous mendacity, to have very little of the reverential about him, a modicum of the philosophical, and a large amount of the broadly comic. His home was to be in Indiana that being a State of the Union abounding in quaint specimens of uncultured and eccentric people.[7]

The wandering showman was next heard of in Wheeling on February 8th. He continued to send letters to the *Plain Dealer* at irregular intervals. He kept moving along — slowly along — always promising to come to Cleveland soon.

Often he commented in his own way on current events and characteristic social phenomena. When John Brown was in retirement after Ossawatomie (three months before the attack on Harper's Ferry) [8] Artemus Ward declared that he had found him in Cleveland, was carting him around disguised as the wax figure of Franklin, and was ready to surrender him any time in return for the reward. Ward visited the Free Love Colony at Berlin Heights, Ohio, the Shakers, and Oberlin College, then a nest of

[7] Hingston, E. P., *The Genial Showman*, 2 vols., 1870; vol. 1, pp. 136, 137.

[8] Those who remember how Cleveland Bergdoll was seen simultaneously in Indiana, Michigan, Texas, and New Jersey, can imagine the hue and cry after Brown.

shocking abolition radicals. Frequently he indulged in a bit of professional reminiscence:

HIGH-HANDED OUTRAGE AT UTICA[9]

In the Faul of 1856, I showed my show in Utiky, a trooly grate sitty in the State of New York.

The people gave me a cordyal recepshun. The press was loud in there prases.

1 day as I was givin a descripshun of my Beests and Snaiks in my usual flowry stile what was my skorn & disgust to see a big burly feller walk up to the cage containin my wax figgers of the Lord's Last Supper, and cease Judas Iscarrot by the feet and drag him out on the ground. He then commenced fur to pound him as hard as he cood.

"What under the son are you abowt?" cried I.

Sez he, "What did you bring this pussylanermus cuss here fur?" & he hit the wax figger another tremenjus blow on the hed.

Sez I, "You egrejus ass, that air's a wax figger — a representashun of the false 'Postle."

Sez he, "That's all very well fur you to say, but I tell you, old man that Judas Iscarrot can't show hisself in Utiky with impunerty by a dern site!" with which observashun he kaved in Judassis hed. The young man belonged to 1 of the first famerlies in Utiky. I sood him, and the Joory brawt in a verdick of Arson in the 3d degree.

In 1860, Browne began to duplicate his copy for the comic weekly, *Vanity Fair,* at $10 an article. This led to his separation from the *Plain Dealer.* He resumed a wandering life as advance agent for Ossian E. Dodge, a musical performer on circuit. This arrangement lasted only about six weeks. He left Dodge in Chicago, and went to New York, by way of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

On January 2, 1861, he made a permanent engagement with *Vanity Fair* of New York. He became an habitué of

[9] *Artemus Ward, His Book,* 1862, pp. 34, 35.

Pfaff's and a member of the Bohemian club, in whose brilliant circle figured T. B. Aldrich, Walt Whitman, Fitz James O'Brien, Henry Clapp, and William Winter. By May, 1861, he was editor-in-chief of *Vanity Fair,* on the retirement of C. G. Leland.

Meanwhile Charles Browne had revised his early A. Ward letters, and submitted them to Derby and Jackson of Philadephia. The book was held back because of war disturbances. Derby and Jackson failed in the summer of 1861 and the manuscript passed into the hands of G. W. Carleton of New York, who finally issued it May 17, 1862, as *Artemus Ward, His Book.*

Forty thousand copies were sold outright, an enormous edition for the times. The author was paid fifteen cents royalty on each copy.[10]

Now was his chance to introduce himself in person to his already admiring public as a "moral lecturer." Such had been his dream for a long while. Having engaged Edward P. Hingston as manager, he delivered his first lecture on *The Babes in the Wood,* in New London, Conn., November 26, 1861. The lecturer's method, in this as in all his other addresses but the *Lecture in Egyptian Hall,* was to introduce his subject, pass inadvertently on to dry comments and hilarious anecdotes about everything but the topic on hand, and proudly to wind up at the end of the hour with a reference to his own complete ignorance of the Babes, Africa, or whatever subject he had promised to make clear to his audience. He did in jest what the popular Lyceum of Chautauqua orator does in earnest. The method was successful. The more serious-minded of his listeners might be mystified, but everyone had a good time.

Browne lectured in New England and New York during

[10] Seitz, Don C., *Artemus Ward,* 1919, p. 120.

the winter. The success of his platform work led to the severance of his connection with *Vanity Fair*. He resigned his editorship April 19, 1862. His last published article for *Vanity Fair* appeared in the number for April 26th. In the winter and spring of 1862–1863 he went on a more extensive tour, getting as far South and West as Memphis.

In the Fall of 1863 he received a telegram from a theatrical manager of San Francisco:

"What will you take for forty nights in California?"

Browne replied, "Brandy and water."

The manager was much puzzled by this answer, and showed it to his friends. The joke spread rapidly along the coast. It was the best of preparations for a tour in the west. Aside from the money returns, such a trip would give the humorist new material for subsequent lectures. Browne left New York, October 13, 1863, to go by the Isthmus to California. Hingston had preceded him as manager. It was their intention to cover California, Nevada, Utah, and return overland to the East, lecturing by the way.

Mark Twain, whom Browne met in Virginia City, Nevada, and for whom he later marketed the *Jumping Frog Story* in New York,[10a] somewhat uncharitably describes the moral lecturer's appearance at this time:

> He looked like a glove-stretcher; his hair, red, and brushed well forward at the sides, reminded one of a divided flame. His nose rambled on aggresively before him with all the strength and determination of a cow-catcher, while his red mustache, to follow out the simile, seemed not unlike the unfortunate cow.[11]

[10a] See Clemens, S. L., *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*, 1901, pp. 343, 344. (The private history of the Jumping Frog story.)

[11] Quoted in Seitz, Don C., *Artemus Ward*, 1919, p. 148, and Hudson, Frederick, *Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872*, 1873, p. 692.

In San Francisco Browne delivered successful lectures. Under Hingston's direction he made lecture trips radiating to Sacramento and the mining towns. He had joyous days and jovial nights. His many friendships throughout the Western tour were cemented with much dissipation. He exchanged yarns with Bret Harte and other famous Californians. He talked with Mexicans, Piute Indians, stage drivers, Mormon saints, miners, and gamblers. In Salt Lake City he nearly died with mountain fever. On February 10, 1864, he left Utah for the East, delivering lectures in Denver, St. Louis, Peoria, Chicago, and other and smaller way stations on the road to New York.

Artemus Ward came back with a book of his travels and material for a new lecture on the Mormons. The lecture he delivered with great success in 1864 and 1865. *Artemus Ward, His Travels,* was published by G. W. Carleton in 1865. *Part 1. Miscellaneous,* is made up of the later showman letters. *Part 2. Among the Mormons,* is the moral lecturer on tour. The new anecdotes are on parade, and good they are. One wonders what lone telegrapher or mountain newspaper man related to him the story of Horace Greeley and the Placerville stage-driver,[12] with its tags:

I've got my orders.
My orders says, " git him there by seving! "
Let go them lines! Clear the way there! Whoo-up! KEEP YOUR SEAT, HORACE!

The tale survives to this day in Montana. I heard it in 1915, told of a park guide, who cried along the trails:

" Clear out of my way! I got to get in on skejulee time."

Was it Browne or Clemens who first picked up the joke

[12] Horace Greeley's Ride to Placerville. *Artemus Ward, His Travels,* pp. 156–162.

about the toothless man? Brown used it in the Egyptian Hall lecture:

"I met a man in Oregon who hadn't any teeth — not a tooth in his head — yet that man could play on the bass drum better than any man I ever knew." [13]

Clemens introduces the same quip as illustrating the points of his method, in *How to Tell a Story.*[14]

In 1866 Browne prepared for a farther flight. He sailed June 2, 1866, for England. Here he received a welcome greater than any the British ever accorded to a travelling American. He was made a member of the Savage Club, and invited to send signed contributions to the foremost English comic weekly. *Punch* even put his name in large letters on the front of the building where its establishment was housed. He was fellow clubman with George Augustus Sala, Brough, George Grossmith, and an intimate friend of Thomas W. Robertson, author of *Fashion,* and *Caste,* and of Thomas Hood, son of the famous humorist.

His panoramic discourse at Egyptian Hall in London was very popular. During November and December, 1866, he lectured to large audiences for six weeks without interruption. His lectures in January were made difficult by the advance of disease. On January 23, he broke down, and was forced to leave the platform in the middle of his speech. He attempted unsuccessfully to stay the ravages of tuberculosis by a trip to the Isle of Jersey, then died at Southampton, March 6, 1867.

Tom Robertson collected the eight letters to *Punch* and published them, with some miscellaneous essays, as *Artemus Ward in London, in 1867.* The Egyptian Hall lecture,

[13] Browne, C. F., *Complete Works,* 4 vols. in 1, New York, 1875. G. W. Carleton, p. 266.

[14] Clemens, S. L., *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg.*

Artemus Ward among the Mormons, with a preface by E. P. Hingston, appeared in 1868.

His four books and his many lectures had endeared Charles Browne to people in the farthest confines of the United States and in the heart of London. More ambitious literary performances of his later maturity would have deepened and widened the appreciation he won. Suppose Mark Twain had died at the age of thirty-four.

The moral lecturer was a familiar figure, an easily understood caricature in America, less universally known to the British Islands.[15] Yet London audiences responded to his travesties and roared at his Yankee sallies. Mme. Bentzon in the *Revue de Deux Mondes*[16] admired the strange humor of his published works, but could not understand how a man of such genius could exhibit and exploit himself like an educated beast (*animal sage*).

English critics elaborately analyzed the tricks of his style and the quirks of his distinctive turn of mind. The London *Spectator*[17] said, in part:

[15] " In the decade of 1850–60 the lecture system reached its height. As the lecture was instructive and moral, it received the support of religious people; also it served a good purpose as an entertainment for the long winter evenings. Of the two hundred lecturers who were in request in many parts of the country, only a few might boast of eloquence, and still fewer spoke with a voice of power. Much that was ephemeral and commonplace was discoursed from the platform in an oracular manner. Yet chief of those who always drew a crowd, and whose utterances in the Lyceum are notes of the intellectual and moral development of the time was Emerson." Rhodes, J. F., *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850,* 1895, vol. 3, pp. 89, 90. See also Hingston, E. P., *The Genial Showman,* 2 vols., 1870; vol. i, pp. 166, 167, 175–185.

[16] Bentzon, Thérèse, *Les Humoristes Americains,* II, Artemus Ward — Josh Billings — Hans Breitman. *Revue de Deux Mondes,* 204: 837–862. (August 15, 1872.)

[17] Quoted in Seitz, Don C., *Artemus Ward,* 1919, pp. 198–205.

Artemus Ward is, as a true humorist should be, even better than his books. What his personal influence adds to the humor of his stories is not of course always easy to analyze, but mainly, we think, this — the impression which he contrives to produce that his mind drifts on hopelessly from one of those grotesque ideas or expressions to the next, as the creature or victim of some overruling power. . . .

The character he best likes to fill is that of a sort of intellectual Hans — the world simpleton of the old German stories — in the act of confiding himself to the public. In the German stories Hans only makes a practical fool of himself in all sorts of impossible ways. But Artemus Ward intellectualizes him, shows the inner absurdity of his own thoughts with a pathetic earnestness and candor. . . . Nothing is better than his eager, ardent way of propounding a truism. You cannot avoid the conviction for a moment that it has just struck him as a real truth. . . . Perhaps the most humorous part of Artemus Ward's lecture, however, is the natural, unresisting way in which he drifts about in search of words and phrases, often conveying a sense of difficulty and conscious error, and then correcting himself by the use of a phrase still more ludicrous, and on which yet he seems to have been landed by an imperious necessity. Thus, when he says that he used to sing, but not well, he stumbles in the most natural way, and is a prey to melancholy that he can't hit on the proper phrase. "As a songer," he said, "I was not successful"; and then, in a depressed and self-correcting way, conscious he had gone wrong, "As a singster I was a failure. I am always saddest when I sing — and so are those who hear me." . . . So again, when he finds the seventeen young Mormon widows weeping, and asks them, "Why is this thus?" he falls a victim to the perplexity and embarrassment with which the juxtaposition of this and thus has overpowered his weak brain, and goes on helplessly, "What is the cause of this thusness?" He cannot evidently help developing at length those subtle suggestions of verbal confusion which so often strike everybody's ear with an idiotic jingle of fascination. This is closely analagous to his curious habit of floating feebly down the chain of intellectual association, however grotesque. When he tells us that the picture of the Nevada Mountains is by "the ancient masters," the mere idea of the ancient masters of course suggests at once that they are dead; so he goes on, "This was the

last picture they painted and then they died." . . . The humor of all this is the humor of helplessness, the humor of letting your thoughts drift idly with the most absurd association that crosses them, and never rescuing yourself by any insurrection of common sense.

The Reverend Hugh Haweis,[18] in his expositions of American humorists to the English people, said of Browne's method that,

> His incapacity — so common with uneducated people — to distinguish between small things and great, is a delightful source of incongruity and amusement; in short, when we least expect it, the regulative power of his mind is suddenly lifted, and mental and physical phenomena are jumbled up together like buttercups and hysterics.

The London *Times*[19] declared that, "his jokes are of that true Transatlantic type to which no nation beyond the limits of the States can offer any parallel. . . . And he has found an audience by whom his caustic humor is thoroughly appreciated."

All critics admitted that the moral lecturer was inimitable.

Browne's great caricature Artemus, the old showman, has many of the characteristics so carefully indicated by his English auditors. In the earliest letters he suffers from what psychologists denominate "total recall." In that extraordinary narrative of his visit to the Shaker community,[20] he drops deliciously into refrains and echoes:

> "You're a man of sin!" he sed.
> "Yay," they said, and I yayed.

But our showman is far from being the utter "boob." He is, too, something more than the presentation of a

[18] Haweis, H. R., *American Humorists,* 1883, p. 137.
[19] Quoted in full in Seitz, Don C., *Artemus Ward,* pp. 205, 206.
[20] The Shakers. In *Artemus Ward, His Book,* pp. 22–33.

local oddity, more than a mere burlesque of P. T. Barnum. The old waxworks proprietor is by his experiences and temperament, as Hingston pointed out, peculiarly fitted to represent the American at large. In this character he does not vilify or slander, as did Nasby and Lowell, for instance. When he chooses to relate his supposed adventures with the Oberlinites, the spiritualists, or the woman's rights advocates, he ridicules these worthies for their advanced ideas. Very properly, he stands firm for the conservatism of his day, though he is too worldly-wise, too kindly, for personal animosity. He preaches the gospel of a broad and upright toleration. But he is typically a mixture of the best and the worst. Upon occasion Artemus can display the noblest sentiments while making the most satisfactory secret agreements with Mammon.

> Cum the moral on 'em strong. If it's a temprance community tell 'em I sined the pledge fifteen minits arter Ise born but on the contery ef your people take their tods, say Mister Ward is as jenial a feller as we ever met, full of conwiviality, & the life an sole of the Soshul Bored.
>
> You scratch my back and I will scratch your back.

How typical this is of one school of American thought and practice.

In indigenous gusto and fertility the social satirist from Baldinsville surpasses all his predecessors. From the first letter, too, he establishes and maintains his reality. Now and then Hosea is too much the young Harvard radical. Bill Arp sometimes slips off his rusticity. Sam Slick occasionally pushes aside his mask to reveal the author's slightly patronizing smile. Artemus never slips, never nods. He is throughout the American commoner in all his individual narrow prosiness and his aggregate deep and unforced and infinite variety.

It is easy enough to say that Browne took from all his

predecessors. Neither the traveller nor the bad speller was new to American humor. He adopted Jack Downing's Yankee and Phoenix's California. He borrowed from oral and written tradition, and from life. He passed on to Billings the hint for decorative orthography, and conferred on Mark Twain the ignorant traveller in Mormondom, as expanded in *Innocents Abroad*. He borrowed and gave, like the greater Elizabethans, prodigally. He laid not up the borrowed talents in a napkin. In the mint of his mind Browne melted the worn coins and sent them out shining. What matter if he stamped them with a prosaic red Indian and buffalo? They are still legal tender in the realm of humor.

Like Browne, Henry Wheeler Shaw had the advantages of good New England ancestry and upbringing, supplemented by extensive wanderings over the North American continent. He was born in 1818 at Lanesborough, Mass. His father was a member of the Massachusetts legislature for twenty-five years, a member of Congress from 1818 to 1821, and political manager for Henry Clay in New England from 1816 to 1840. An uncle was for many years Chief Justice of the state of New York. Young Shaw entered Hamilton College, Utica, N. Y., in 1832 and served out his freshman year. His biographer says that he put into action a sudden resolution to abandon the East, while en route for college the following year. Bill Arp [21] quotes Shaw's own more picturesque, but not necessarily accurate version.

> I was an indolent, trifling boy. I wouldn't work and I wouldn't study at school. I had a longing to get away from home and go west. Most everybody was going West, and on one morning my father said to me: " henry i reckon you had better go. You

[21] Bill Arp on Josh Billings. In Smith, C. H., *The Farm and the Fireside*, p. 253.

are not doing any good here." And so he gave me ten dollars and a whole lot of advice, and my mother fixed me up a little bundle of clothes and I started. That money lasted me until I got away out to Illinois, for I worked a little along the way to pay for lodging and vittels.

The Yankee adventurer led a roving life in the West for many years. He was by turns farmer, coal operator, captain of an Ohio River steamboat, real estate agent, and auctioneer. In 1858, at the age of forty, he settled in Poughkeepsie, in the professional capacity of auctioneer. The next year he sent a few articles to the newspapers, including the *Essay on the Mule*, his first. These articles made no stir. In 1860 he began again, transliterating *An Essa on the Muel bi Josh Billings.*[22]

The mule is haf hoss, and haf Jackass, and then kums to a full stop, natur diskovering her mistake. Tha weigh more, akording tu their heft, than enny other kreetur, except a crowbar. Tha kant hear enny quicker, nor further than the hoss, yet their ears are big enuff for snow shoes. You kan trust them with enny one whose life aint worth enny more than the mules. The only wa tu keep them into a paster, is tu turn them into a medder jineing, and let them jump out. Tha are reddy for use, just as soon as they will du tu abuse. Tha haint got enny friends, and will live on huckel berry brush, with an ockasional chanse at Kanada thissels. Tha are a modern invenshun i dont think the Bible deludes tu them at tall. Tha sell for more money than enny other domestik animile. You kant tell their age by looking into their mouth, enny more than you kould a Mexican cannons. Tha never hav no disease that a good club wont heal. If tha ever die tha must kum rite tu life agin, for i never herd nobody sa "ded mule." Tha are like sum men, very korrupt at harte; ive known them tu be good mules for 6 months, just tu git a good chanse to kick sumbody. I never owned one, nor never mean to, unless there is a United States law passed, requiring it. The only reason why tha are pashunt, is bekause tha are ashamed ov themselfs. I have seen eddikated

[22] Shaw, H. W., *Josh Billings, His Sayings,* pp. 13, 14.

mules in a sirkus. Tha kould kick, and bite, tremenjis. I would not sa what I am forced tu sa again the mule, if his birth want an outrage, and man want tu blame for it. Enny man who is willing tu drive a mule, ought to be exempt by law from running for the legislatur. Tha are the strongest creeturs on earth, and heaviest, ackording tu their sise; I herd tell ov one who fell oph from the tow path, on the Eri kanawl, and sunk as soon as he touched bottom, but he kept rite on towing the boat tu the nex stashun, breathing thru his ears, which stuck out ov the water about 2 feet 6 inches; i didn't see this did, but an auctioneer told me ov it, and i never knew an auctioneer tu lie unless it was absolutely convenient.

This essay he sent to a New York newspaper. Within a month he saw it reprinted in three comic journals, *Nick Nacks, Yankee Notions* and *Budget of Phun.* Shaw said to himself: "I think I have touched oil." He was not mistaken. With a growing repute he continued to publish skits and essays. In 1863 he began to lecture. For three years his addresses, "a series of pithy sayings without care or order, delivered in an apparently awkward manner," had little success. Gradually he built up a reputation in this field also, and made himself a widely popular speaker in lyceums in all parts of the country. For some time he averaged eighty lectures in a season. Carleton published for him *Josh Billings, His Sayings* (1865) and *Josh Billings on Ice* (1868). Later publications of his collected sayings and little essays were also well received. He left behind him some ten volumes of humorous observations on life.

In 1870 he published the first of his famous *Farmer's Allminax.* Comic almanacs had appeared sporadically before, but none had become widely popular. The forms which he had already developed, Yankee aphorisms, mock advertisements, advice to correspondents, moral essays on the vegetables, beasts, and men were peculiarly adapted to this venture. That he had had it in mind for some

time is proven by the tentative *Aulminak* for 1865,[23] printed in *Josh Billings on Ice* (1868).

The forecasts for 1869 run from the first to the twentieth of March:

Saturday, 1st Sum wind; look out for squalls, and pack peddlers; munny is tight, so are briks. Ben Johnson had his boots tapped 1574; eggs a dollar a piece, hens on a strike; mercury 45 degrees above zero; snow, mixed with wind. . . .

Monday, 3rd — Big wind; omnibus, with 17 passengers inside, blown over in Broadway; sow lettuce, and sow on buttons; about these days look out for wind; Augustus Ceezer sighns the tempranse pledge 1286; strong simptons ov spring; sun sets in wind. . . .

Sunday, 9th, — This is the Sabbath, a day that our fathers thought a good deal ov. Mutch wind (in sum ov the churches); streets lively, bissiness good; prize fight on the palisades; police reach the ground after the fight is aul over, and arrest the ropes and the ring.

The first complete specimen of the *Allminax,* for 1870, was published in October, 1869. Two thousand copies were first printed. For the first two months it had a slow sale. During the next three months, however, 90,000 copies were printed and sold. At the end of that time the pamphlet was taken out of print. One hundred and seventeen thousand copies of the issue for 1871 were distributed. The sales of the third year exceeded 100,000. The fourth year of the publication of the *Allminax* 100,000 copies were sold to the American News Company, at one sale. "In the ten years of its issue a higher number than 50,000 copies a year were published and sold, twenty-five pages for twenty-five cents." The author received a royalty of three cents a copy. The *Allminax* were the chief source of his immense popularity.

[23] *Josh Billings on Ice,* 1868, pp. 234–238.

With essays, pithy sayings, and comic lectures Shaw rounded out his life. For twenty years previous to his death he contributed regularly to the New York *Weekly,* and the articles appearing in the *Century Magazine* under the pen name of Uncle Esek were of his making. The dignity of that magazine forbade simplified spelling and the other liberties which were expected of Josh Billings. Shaw died in Monterey, California, in 1885.

The *Allminax,* on which the best of his reputation rests, contain a wide variety of material. The calendar pages are topped with a crude illustration and a running rhyme. The column of dates, forecasts, and anniversaries reads much like the *Aulminak for 1869.* It is balanced by a series of maxims and observations. Some feeble and rehashed aphorisms are inevitable. For the most part his one-line witticisms are extremely racy.

Opposite each calendar page is a characteristic paragraph or two. The almanac for 1870 contains a series of monographs on the months.

APRIL MONOGRAPH [24]

April, dear April, chuck full ov charms
Cum, cum oh cum tew my arms.

thus warbled the poet, more than twelve thousand years ago, and he knew his bizz, he had the right sting in him, he want none ove yore pedigree poets, nor dispepshee poets, nor whiskee poets.

Dandylions planted this month are almost sure tew hed out, so are tud stools, so are hed cheeze. This month iz also helthy for planting onions, onions are a luxury, and are good for a bad breth, or are bad for a good breth, i hav forgot which, but either way iz right.

1871 has a series of essays on familiar beasts, "The Natural Hornet," "The Universal Swine," "The Gritty

[24] The paging of the almanacs is very irregular. It has seemed best to indicate only the general location of selections.

Angleworm," "The Melodius Cat," "The Briny Codfish," "The Frequent Fly," and others. 1872 bears monthly "Horoskopes." 1873 explains the twelve signs of the Zodiak.

The *Allminak for 1874* has a most amusing set of little biographies of Billings ancestors:

Adam Billings, "the fust ov the Billingses," "born ez near as i kan figger, about the year 1200, more or less"; Zepheniah Billings, "a phiddler bi birth and purswashun"; Jehossaphatt Billings, "a very kluss man," who "died at the age of 63, if i hav sarched right, from an overdose of klam chowder drank at a free lunch"; Melkisidek, Soloman, Duteronomy B., Porkanbeans Billings, "a hoss jockey of the anshunt daze"; Jamaika, "the lazyest man that ever visited this world"; Ekleeziastiks, Luke (a schoolmaster who "never got married, he hadn't the time tew spare." He was severely engaged, for 26 years tew Nancy Burbanks); Nebukennezzar and Mushanmilk Billings, his Memorandum.

The following years contain a miscellaneous assortment of esays, "The Apple Dumplin," "Fun Eazy Boots," "Woman," "Politeness," "The Litenin Rod Man," "The Bumble Bee," "The Yankee Pedlar," "The Alligator," "The Loafer," "The Centaur," "The Milksop," "The Grasshopper iz a Burden," "The Auctioneer," "The Rhinosseross and The Violet," "The Quack," "The Deakon," "The Average Boarding House." Interspersed among these are "Lost and Found" columns, "Advice to Yung Men," "Questions and Answers," "Correspondence," and "Indiskriminate Hints." The advertising pages also carry fragments, letters of good counsel, and illustrated maxims.

The preface of 1872 may have given suggestions in style to that school of modern prose whose exponent is Gertrude Stein.

Letter to Farmers

Beloved Farmers:

Agrikultur iz the mother ov farm produce; she iz also the stepmother ov gardin sass.

Rize at haff past 2 o'clock in the morning, bild up a big fire in the kitchen, burn out two pounds ov kandels, and grease yure boots.

Wait pashuntly for da brake. When da duz brake, then commense tew stir up the geese, and hogs.

Too much sleep is ruinous tew geese and tew hogs. Remember yu kant git ritch on a farm, unless yu rize at 2 o'clock in the morning, and stir up the hogs, and worry the geese.

The happyest man in the world is the farmer; he rizes at 2 o'clock in the morning, he watches for da lite tew brake, and when she does brake, he goes out and stirs up the geese and worrys the hogs.

What iz a lawyer? — What iz a merchant? — What iz a doktor? — What iz a minister? — I answer, nothing!

A farmer iz the nobless work ov God; he rizes at 2 o'clock in the morning, and burns out haff a pound ov wood and two kords ov kandels, and then goes out tew worry the geese and stir up the hogs.

Beloved farmers, adew.

Josh Billings

The aphorisms, his most abundant contributions, may be studied in all his volumes. They range from punning and banality to homely wit and philosophy. In some the spelling is the only novelty:

A blush kant be kounterfited.[25]

Wit, in a woman, kan never replace the want ov buty.[26]

Reason often makes mistakes, but conshience never duz.[27]

[25] *Almanac*, December, 1875. (The almanacs for 1870–1879 were reprinted in book form as *Old Probability; Perhaps Rain-Perhaps Not*, by Josh Billings, 1879.)

[26] *Almanac*, 1878, p. 14 (face page, May, 1878).

[27] *Ibid.*, December, 1875.

Josh's scorn for a hypocrite and a fool, his hatred of atheism and rum, and his fondness for easy boots, recur frequently.

If you don't beleaf in "total depravity," buy a quart of gin and studdy it.[28]

Rum is good in its plase, and hel is the plase for it.[29]

Whiskee haz done a grate deal for this kuntry, in the way ov pentitentiary homes, and houses for the poor, and i suppose, if it want for whiskee, theze houses would aktually hav tew shut up.[30]

The auctioneer shows himself a good family man. He often refers to the best methods of bringing up children, and is frequent in his praises of a good wife and a good dinner. He is fond of comfort, hates insect parasites, and loves "easy boots." There is an intensely sympathetic flavor in some of his comments on human relationships.

Waiting to be whipt iz the most uninteresting period in boyhood life.[31]

Thare iz no sure kure for lazyness, but i hav known a seckond wife to hurry it sum.[32]

Courting is a luxury, it is sallad, it is ise water, it is a beveridge. It is the pla spell ov the soul. The man who has never courted has lived in vain. . . . He has ben a deff man in the land ov hand orgins.[33]

With his domesticity he has a thoroughly masculine appreciation of pretty young girls and lively widows, and likewise a contempt for old maids and woman's rights advocates. Among the "Things I Don't Hanker After to See," is:

[28] *Josh Billings, His Sayings,* p. 113.
[29] *Josh Billings, His Sayings,* p. 82.
[30] *Josh Billings on Ice,* pp. 165, 166.
[31] *Almanac,* 1877, p. 8 (face page, Feb., 1877).
[32] *Ibid.,* 1879, p. 15 (May, 1879).
[33] *Josh Billings, His Sayings,* p. 145.

A man out at the elbows, and his wife out at a woman's rites convenshun.[34]

He is as orthodox in his religion, but the fringes of his conservative faith are tinged with sophistication:

After Joseph's brethren had beat him out of hiz cut of menny cullers, what did tha dew nex? Tha pittied him! [35]

I would rather number amung mi intimates an ideot, or even a pikpocket than infidel.[36]

Thare is a grate deal ov religion in this world that iz like a life preserver, only put on at the moment of extreme danger and then half the time put on hind side before.[37]

Most people repent ov their sins bi thanking God they aint so wicked as their nabers.[38]

Allmost enny phool kan prove that the bible aint true, it takes a wize man to beleave it.[39]

Thare may cum a time when the Lion, and the Lam will lie down together, — i shall be az glad to see it as enny boddy — but i am still betting on the Lion.[40]

Christians seem to fite under cover, but the devil stands boldly out and dares the world to combat.[41]

The more humble a man iz before God the more he will be exalted, — the more humble he iz before man, the more he will git rode ruff shod.[42]

This apparent skepticism is the by-product of a real faith and devotion. It arises from an earnest attempt to reconcile the articles of Christian belief with the familiar code of contemporary social practice. Billings complains many times of his New England conscience. The same awareness of the inconsistencies of faith and works gives point to his observations on ethics versus human nature.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 143.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[36] *Almanac*, 1878, p. 50.
[37] *Ibid.*, October, 1876, n.p.
[38] *Ibid.*, 1875, p. 4.
[39] *Ibid.*, 1879, p. 7 (Jan., 1879).
[40] *Ibid.*, 1879, p. 33.
[41] *Ibid.*, 1875, p. 7 (Jan., 1875).
[42] *Ibid.*, 1874, p. 29 (Dec., 1874).

If you want to git a fust klass situashun in sum alms house, giv all yure property to yure children before yu die.[43]

Noboddy really luvs to be cheated, but it duz seem az tho every one waz anxious to see how near they could cum to it.[44]

Dont never trust a man at the rate ov 50 cents on a dollar — if you kant confide in him at par let him slide.[45]

A good karacter is allwuz gained bi inches, but iz often lost in one chunk.[46]

Kats are very humble, espeshily just after they hav committed sum nu kind ov deviltry.[47]

Honesty is the rarest welth enny one kan possess, and yet all the honesty in the world aint lawful tender for a loaf ov bread.[48]

The first 3 notes i endorsed i had to pay, and i hope it will be jiss so with the next 3.[49]

Dont dispise yure poor relashuns, they may be kum suddenly ritch sum day, and then it will be awkward to explain things to them.[50]

Employment iz the grate boon ov life, a man with nothing to do, iz not haff so interesting, az a ripening turnip.[51]

Yung man, mark yure goose up hi, two thirds of the world hav no other idea ov value, only by the price that iz put onto things.[51]

Musick hath charms to soothe a savage; this may be so, but i wud rather tri a revolver on him fust.[52]

Experience teaches us mutch, but learns us little.[53]

The effect of Billings's pithy lines is gained partly by the homely sophistication, partly by the ludicrous spelling, partly by bits of coarseness which heighten the color of

[43] *Almanac,* 1875, p. 13 (face page, April, 1875).
[44] *Ibid.,* April, 1876, n.p.
[45] *Ibid.,* 1875, p. 13 (April, 1875).
[46] *Ibid.,* February, 1876, n.p.
[47] *Ibid.,* 1878, p. 12 (face page, April, 1878).
[48] *Ibid.,* 1876 (face page, July, 1876, n.p.).
[49] *Ibid.,* 1879, p. 22.
[50] *Ibid.,* Dec., 1879.
[51] *Almanac* (face page, May, 1876, n.p.).
[52] *Josh Billings, His Sayings,* p. 86.
[53] *Almanac,* 1877, p. 4.

lowly life. "Amerikans," as he said himself, "love caustick things:[54] they would prefer turpentine tew colonewater, if they had tew drink either" (a trifle prophetic, that). "So with their relish of humor; they must hav it on the half-shell with cayenne."

The contradictions visible to his wordly perspicacity are easily translated into anti-climaxes and paradoxes. He is very skilled in reanimating a familiar platitude by turning it into the vernacular. Bill Arp[55] has remarked upon this gift:

> It is curious how we are attracted by the wise, pithy sayings of an unlettered man. It is the contrast between his mind and his culture. We like contrasts and we like metaphors and striking comparisons. The more they are according to nature and everyday life, the better they please the masses. The cultured scholar will try to impress us by saying *facilis descensus averni*, but Billings brings the same idea nearer home, when he says, "When a man starts down hill, it looks like everything is greased for the occasion." We can almost see the fellow sliding down. It is an old thought that has been dressed up fine for centuries, and suddenly appears in everyday clothes.

Americans love platitudes. Their favorite teachers, from Franklin to Harding, have fed them plenty of them. They love to be led along against wild courses. Whatever their secret transgressions, outwardly they accept the middle course with resignation, and console themselves with maxims, though they know, as does the whimsical Josh, that, "All the philosophy in the world, wont make a hard trotting horse ride eazy.[56]

It must be some vestige of this preference for sage advice which makes a present-day critic commend the moral

[54] *Josh Billings on Ice,* p. 183.
[55] Smith, C. H., *The Farm and the Fireside,* p. 252.
[56] *Almanac,* 1875, p. 11 (face page, March, 1875).

and advisory tone of Ward and Billings above their sly cynicism and genius for social satire.

It is as moralists, however, that Ward and Billings serve us best. They had the Platonist and Christian instinct for a measureless leniency with persons, combined with a critical severity towards actions and policies.[57]

Whatever their excelling grace may be, the two funny men gave a national presentation and a philosophical interpretation of the common man. They saw the unlettered man of the people on a grander scale than any of his sectional interpreters had ever seen him. And while preserving all his provincial charm and whimsical individuality, they were able to make him, in person and in reputation, a national hero.

A complete bibliography of Charles Farrar Browne may be found in Seitz, Don C., *Artemus Ward* (Charles Farrar Browne), a Biography and a Bibliography, 1919, pp. 319–338.

A list of the works of Henry Wheeler Shaw, in order of their publication, may be found in the *Cambridge History of American Literature,* vol. II, p. 509. For biography and criticism of Shaw, see:

Bentzon, Thérèse, *Les Humoristes Americains, II,* Artemus Ward. — Josh Billings. — Hans Breitman. *Revue des Deux Mondes,* 204: 837–862 (August 15, 1872).

Cambridge History of American Literature, 11, 156.

Hudson, Frederick, *Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872,* 1873, p. 692.

Mudge, James, *A Philosophical Humorist. Methodist Review,* 101: 209 (March, 1918).

Neglected Worthies. Nation, 107: 167 (Aug. 17, 1918).

Pattee, F. H., *American Literature Since 1870.*

Smith, C. H., *The Farm and the Fireside,* 1892, pp. 252–254.

Smith, Francis Shubael, *Life and Adventures of Josh Billings,* New York, 1883.

Thompson, E. P., *The Home of Josh Billings. New England Magazine,* n.s., v. 19, pp. 696–703.

[57] *Neglected Worthies,* Nation, 107: 165 (August 17, 1918).

CHAPTER VII

PHILOSOPHERS OF THE PRESENT DAY

With the passing of Josh Billings the main current of American comic tradition suffered a diffusion and a change. New social and economic conditions were arising, from which sprang new character types in American humor. In the face of American industrialism, and empire-building, the rustic and villager were fast being swamped by the immigrant and city-dweller. The rural philosopher no longer made himself felt. He was becoming a memory of boyhood days, a rube on Broadway, or an oddity seen on summer vacations. Until the dirt farmer has maintained a dominant position in politics for some time, the unlettered critic will probably remain a mere curiosity to the nation at large.

In the eighties and nineties the local color movement made an earnest effort to preserve the memories of a vanishing provincial civilization. It seized on a number of rural types, the New England old maid, the unsatisfied farm wife, the pert child, the bad boy, the brutal pioneer farmer of the Middle West, the ne'er-do-well, the hired girl, the rebellious young man. Too often its efforts at delineating these persons were hampered by the necessity of building a main plot around the sweet young girl and handsome though red-wristed youth of the commercial short story. The authors who shared in this movement were, with few exceptions, lacking in more than a superficial understanding of human psychology and emotions.

Their characterizations tended to become stereotyped and uninteresting.

This group made assiduous use of the wise old rustic. He was an obvious type. In prose and poetry countless crackerbox philosophers showed their heads; Zury, the meanest man in Spring County, David Harum, Silas Lapham, Puddn'head Wilson, the old woman of the *Hoosier Schoolmaster,* Colonel Eskew Arp, and other such worthies. Even Little Lord Fauntleroy had a wise old shopkeeper for his mentor. James Whitcomb Riley and Will Carleton carried on the tradition in verse. But the industrious local colorists contemplated the philosopher-humorist in melancholy retrospect. He was becoming a rarity.

In the fiction and poetry of today the rustic philosopher has an even less favorable presentation. To the Young Intellectuals, so-called, of the twentieth century, anything savoring of tradition is anathema. They jibe at village types. They ignore or scarify the rustic wiseacre. It is not too much to say that the whole of Spoon River Anthology is an arraignment of the hypocrisy and the futility of the conventional morality preached by the unlettered philosopher.

To some extent the cartoonist was responsible for this break in a national tradition. Thomas Nast, a great satirist, was an iconoclast in more senses than one. He let loose a horde of new symbols to replace the old, which have multiplied under the cultivation of later comic artists. The American citizen, if he thinks of himself en masse today, probably visualizes the wistful undersized figure of The Public, as he sees him on the page facing the editorials of the *Saturday Evening Post.*

The man of the people in the comic writing of the late nineties was popularly represented as a city-dweller, and a hyphenated American. Chimmie Fadden, the Yellow Kid,

with his "poipers" and his "wat t'ell" had an enormous vogue. Martin Dooley (Finley Peter Dunne) became the critic of national affairs during the Spanish War.

The sage of Archey Road was not an unheralded figure. Drama and vaudeville had long featured the Irish comedian. Private Miles O'Reilly had ridiculed Gideon Welles and the monitors. But Miles was by no means the outstanding critic of the sixties. He got, and he deserved, no more than a temporary fame as a writer of clever, ephemeral skits. He was a forerunner.

Mr. Dooley is a more carefully studied character. He has wit, and he has a bold imagination, a sharp tongue, a wide sympathy, and a blessed fund of common sense. Without sacrificing his patriotism or his good temper, he fairly riddles the jingoism of the Republican war-party. His disrespect is equalled only by his penetration. Admiral Dewey is Dooley's "Cousin George," Teddy Rosenfeld goes "plungin' into ambuscades an' Sicrity of Wars." President McKinley is the perfect American amateur in diplomacy:

Down th' sthreet comes a ma-an fr'm th' counthry, — a lawyer fr'm Ohio, with a gripsack in his hand. Oh, but he's a proud man. He's been in town long enough f'r to get out iv th' way iv th' throlley ca-ar whin th' bell rings. He's larned not to thry and light his see-gaar at th' ilicthric light. He doesn't offer to pay th' ilivator ma-an f'r carrin' him upstairs. He's got so he can pass a tall buildin' without thryin' f'r to turn a back summersault. An' he's as haughty about it as a new man on an ice wagon. They'se nawthin ye can tell him. He thinks iv himsilf goin' back to Canton with a r-red necktie on, an' settin' on a cracker box an' tellin' th' lads whin they come in fr'm pitchin' hor-reshoes what a hot time he's had, an' how he's seen th' hootchy-kootchy, an' th' Pammer House Barber shop an' th' other ondacint sights iv a gr-reat city. . . . An' th' la-ad f'rm Canton thinks he can pick out th' Jack, an' sometimes he can an' sometimes he can't, but th' end iv it is th' Spanyard has him

thrimmed down to his chest protector, an' he'll be goin back to Canton in a blanket.

Mr. Dooley is well aware of the flaw in American territorial designs:

"I know what I'd do if I was Mack," said Mr. Hennessey. "I'd hist a flag over the Ph'lippeens, an' I'd take in the whole lot iv thim."

"An' yet," said Mr. Dooley, "'tis not more thin two months since ye larned whether they were islands or canned goods. Ye'er back yard is so small that ye'er cow can't turn r-round without buttin' th' woodshed off th' premises, an' ye wuddent go out to th' stock yards without takin' out a policy on yer life. Suppose ye was standin' at th' corner iv State Sthreet an' Archey R-road, wud ye know what car to take to get to th' Philippeens. If yer son, Packy, was to ask ye where th' Ph'lippeens is, cud ye give him anny good idea whether they was in Rooshia or jus' wast iv th' thracks?"

"Mebbe I cudden't," said Mr. Hennessey haughtily, "but I'm f'r takin' thim in, annyhow."

Andrew Carnegie is told off in a sentence which applies to many of our philanthropists with a liking for the limelight. Says Martin of Andy:

There's a man I like. He's good comp'ny. Whin nobody is talkin' an some people ar-re thinkin' iv goin home, he's always ready to jump in and get up some kind iv parlor intertainmint, whether tis rayformed spellin' or a peace conference, or a hundhred gr-reatest men compytition.

Like many an old fellow of his day the staid saloonkeeper has little sympathy with labor troubles.

A prolotoorio, Jawn, is th' same thing as a hobo.

I haven't had a sandwich f'r a year because ivry time I've asked f'r wan ayether th' butchers or th' bakers has been out on sthrike.

Mr. Dooley is perhaps the most versatile of our political and social satirists. He disposes of golf, woman's suffrage, grand opera, college professors, lying, with a lambent equanimity which is not above shedding sparks. He plays on the emotions with a masterly hand. We have not in all our literature a more riotously funny essay than *The Grippe*. Again he can show the most touching reticence in his use of the pathetic. Poor Shaughnessy is "one of th' quite people nayether you nor me hears tell iv fr'm wan end iv th' year to another." He has "wurreked f'r Larkin th' conthractor, f'r near twinty years without skip or break." His six children have all died or disappeared, except Theresa, "a big clean-lookin child that I see grow up fr'm hello to good av'nin'. She thought on'y iv th' ol' man, an' he leaned on her as if she was a crutch." The day of Theresa's wedding with "young Donahue av th' Nineteenth" has come.

Th' ol' man took on twinty years, but he was as brave as a gin'ral iv th' army. He cracked jokes an' he made speeches an' he took th' pipes fr'm under th' elbow iv Hogan, th' blindman, an' played "Th' Wind that shakes th' Barley" till ye'd have wore y'r leg to a smoke f'r wantin' to dance. Thin he wint to th' dure, with th' two iv thim; an', says he, "Well," he says, "Jim, be good to her," he says, an' shook hands with her through th' carredge window.

Him an' me sat a long time smokin' across th' stove. Fin'lly, says I, "Well," I says, "I must be movin'." "What's th' hurry?" says he. "I've got to go," says I. "Wait a moment," says he. "Theresa 'll"—. He stopped right there f'r a minyit, holdin' to th' back iv th' chair. "Well," says he, "if ye got to go, ye must," he says. "I'll show ye out," says he. An' he come with me to th' dure, holdin' th' lamp over his head. I looked back at him as I wint by; an' he was settin' be th' stove, with his elbows on his knees, an' th' empty pipe between his teeth.

Mr. Dooley's observations and experiences are shot with pain and joy and sorrow. Yet through it all he preserves

a wisdom and a sense of humor. His sententiae are like all those of the American sages, tolerably conservative and not too serious. Their Irishisms are unhackneyed.

Me experyence with goold minin' is it's always in th' nex county.

They'se no intoxicant in th' wurruld, Hinnissy, like money. It goes to th' head quicker thin th' whiskey th' druggist makes in his back room.

Some iv th' boldest liars I iver met wud've been thruthful men if they'd dared to be.

Onaisy, as Hogan says, is th' head that wears a crown. They'se other heads that're onaisy too; but ye don't hear iv them.

So we leave the best of our foreign-born sages. If the hearts of our later immigrant critics are as sound and as sweet as Martin Dooley's they will bear rich fruit.

By far the most conspicuous of Mr. Dooley's successors are the two cloak and suit men, Potash and Perlmutter (Montague Marsden Glass). They introduce the reader to a new world of idiom and social tradition. It is a far cry from the sarcastic brevities of the rustic philosopher to the involved meanderings, the 'olav hasholem's of Abe and Mawruss. Yet the pair are true provincials. Their chief charm, aside from the grotesqueries of their phraseology, lies in the naïveté with which they transform the events of the world into images drawn from Jewish family life and commercial transactions. Mr. Biglow interpreted Congress in his native idiom. Potash and Perlmutter explain the Czar and Mr. Hoover in theirs.

Which if Kerensky would have had experiences as a travelling salesman, Abe, it wouldn't hurt him to be practically spending his entire time commuting between Moscow and Petersburg.

"What do you mean — down to sixty-eight degrees?" said Morris Perlmutter (about the Garfield recommendations for coal economy). "If a feller which lives in a New York City apartment-house nowadays could get the temperature of his rooms

so high as down to forty-eight degrees, y'understand, it's only because some of the tenants 'ain't come across with the janitor's present yet, and he still has hopes."

Where grand opera gets its big boost, Mawruss . . . is that practically everybody with a rating higher than J to L, credit fair, hates to admit that it don't interest them at all.

The public taste for moralization in trade terms is exploited by others than Abe and Mawruss. Mrs. Emma McChesney teaches the heart-throbs of the petticoat trade to beat in modest decorum. Cappy Ricks syndicates to the Sunday supplements sage advice of the Pacific coast ship-owner. Bill Adams meditates for *Adventure* readers upon the ups and downs of the common sailor. The wisdom of Uncle Remus has descended to The Wildcat and Mr. Florian Slappey, who muse in an exaggerated dialect upon gambler's luck and the vicissitudes of colored society.

By far the most bizarre of our immigrant commentators is the Japanese schoolboy, Hashimura Togo (Wallace Irwin).[1] His helpless puzzlement and hopeless misunderstanding of organized sports, the American housewife, and the political methods of the "Uniteds State" make an objective, though distorted, picture of contemporary life, which is not without significance. He discourses in crabbed verse and crabbeder prose on *Flighty Navigation of Air, The Conventional Meeting of Reps in Chicago, The Hon. Gasolene, Outside Exercises for Health, Can Hon North Pole be Detected?, The Servant Problemb,* and kindred topics.

Togo has a great interest in famous men — Them Right Bros., Child Ruth, Hon. Jenny Bryan, Jo-uncle Cannon. During the Taft campaign he speculates on *Can Africa*

[1] Irwin, Wallace Admah, *Letters of a Japanese Schoolboy,* 1909. *Mr. Togo, Maid of All Work,* 1913; *Hashimura Togo, Domestic Scientist,* 1914; *More Letters of a Japanese Schoolboy,* 1923.

Wait Till March 4th? (for Roosevelt to shoot up all its big game), endorses *A Third Term for Our Emperor,* and commends *Standard Oiling across Party Lines.* Still, he sees room for improvement in our cherished system of checks and balances for governmental authority. Under the wistful title, *Is a Vice-Pres Nearly a King?,* he writes:

San Francisco, July 12th

Editor New York Newspaper which are responsible for everything.

Dear Sir — Noted Greek patriot, Erysipelas, were once offered job of Street Cleaning Department in Athens, Greece, which was then in a very insane state of dirt. Intimides, Mayor of Athens, offer him this job for a insult, because it was. How useless however!

"Ah!" commute them Erysipelas, "I will took such a publick jobs & show what a elegant mucksweep I can do."

So he done it by history.

Mr. Editor, some patriot of America should become like Hon. Erysipelas & be a Vice-President without doing a sulk. To be a Vice-President are like such a Street Cleansing job, only it are more hummbel. He are like a street-sweeper without a broom. He are not permitted to carry turkey-dusters or other dangerous fire-arms. He are placed in a very high seat & commanded to set there 4 years enjoying silences. Raking, brooming & dusting are a forbid. If he are caught trying to wipe cobwebs off of Senate with silk handkerchief he are given a upbraid. He enjoy very hopeless position — and yet he might do something for somebody some days. If he start young being a Vice-President might he not work up to good position by this? Might he not, by eventual time, get a job being 3d secretary to German Embassy or clerk in Subtreasury Dept?

I ask for anxiety.

The Japanese American attempts an intelligent interest in baseball:

I am scientifick about this Game which is finished by following rules:

One strong-arm gentleman called a Pitch is hired to throw. Another gentleman called a Stop is responsible for whatever that Hon. Pitch throw to him, so he protect himself from wounding by sofa-pillows which he wear on hands. Another gentleman called a Striker stand in front to that Stop and hold up club to fright off that Hon. Pitch from angry rage of throwing things. But it is useless. Hon. Pitch in hand hold one baseball of an unripe condition of hardness. He raise that arm lofty — then twist — O sudden! He shoot them bullet-ball straight to breast of Hon. Stop. Hon. Striker swing club for vain effort. It is a miss & them deathly ball shoot Hon. Stop in gloves. "Struck once!" decry Hon. Umperor, a person which is there to gossip about it in loud voice. . . .

Baseball is healthy game for Americans. It permit them to enjoy sunstroke in middle of patriotick sounds, it teach them a entirely courageous vocabulary and put 10,000,000,000,000 peanuts in circulation by each annual year. Japan must learn to do it. If all Japanese wishing to become heroes should go set in bleachers each afternoon-time it might change them from Yellow Peril to yelling section in short generation.

But warfare is a more agreeable way.

Togo's more intimate acquaintance with American life is of course from the angle of the kitchen sink. He struggles with dishwash, devilish ham samditches and letus and marionaise dressing. He essays to control *The Hon. Vacuum Who Cleans Things*. In one household he makes the acquaintance of Florence the cat. "Her feet was deliciously full of thorns." When callers come, he listens, and thus defends itself:

It was my duty to massage off the mahogany furniture in dining-room annexed to parlour, so how could I avoid overhearing what they said? I did not attempt to do so, however much I tried. It was my duty to polish that furniture in dining room, so there I was. If ladies cannot keep their conversation hushed, Servants cannot make their ears behave. This is human-natural.

The Japanese schoolboy's misunderstanding of the contradictions of American life is adequately symbolized by

his observations on "'Slank,' which means 'talking-with-words-that-is-found-here-and-there.'"

American gentlemen I have speaked to employ the following kinds of conversation:

1. Kind what is discovered in Dixionary book.
2. Kind what is not there.

In Dixionary of Hon. Noah Webster there contain 26,000 language-words to talk. It took this gentleman lifetime to do so. To speak American language it is necessary to learn them 26,000 natural words, which I have did, thank you. But it is useless to try so hard because elsewhere-words is commonly used for conversation. Where must Japanese Boy go to obtain such talk?

It is the Elsewhere-words, the Elsewhere-customs, the Elsewhere-thoughts which make up our secret social philosophy, very different from our professed tenets. All our unlettered critics have tried to strip away the smug garments from this hidden code, to break down the barriers between the theory and the practice of American life, and to arrive openly at a working compromise. It has been a praiseworthy attempt.

Though ringed with hyphenated critics our Nordic faction is not without its native advisers. While Edgar Guest sells his hundred thousands we shall not lack for a solemn dispenser of platitudes. We have our modern provincial sages, each with a large audience, though no one is pre-eminent. Irvin Cobb's Judge Priest still upholds the tradition of the kindly old Southerner. George Creel's Uncle Henry peers quizzically over his specs at our changing civilization. Will Rogers lassoes many a sharp truth. Walt Mason's rhymes ripple out from the standing grain of Kansas, ripe with wisdom.

Outside of enthusiastic Hoosiers, newspaper editors, and literary men, few people appear to have heard of Abe Martin of Brown County, Indiana (Frank McKinney Hub-

bard). He is perhaps the most piquant of our social satirists of today. He parodies the local items of the country newspaper in a manner much resembling Billings's travesties on the old-fashioned almanac. His droll notices of the doings of Miss Fawn Lippincutt, Miss Tawny Apple, Joe Lark, and Tilford Moots have the slyest implications.

Mrs. Tilford Moots will take her little boy t' see Niagary Falls next week, as he'll soon be too old t' ride fer nothin'.

Leslie Tanger went mushroomin' yisterday an' poisoned his whole family on golf balls.

Lafe Bud wuz showin a dollar around today that he saved out o' last week's salary.

Th' fellers that struck at th' saw mill, Thursday, motored back t' work this mornin'.

Pinky Kerr has got so he kin take bay rum without th' shave.

A new endless towel is makin' a test run at th' Palace hotel.

Miss Fawn Lippincutt has a handsome new two-piece votin' suit.

Constable Newt Plum broke three quarts out of a possible four in a runnin' fight with a boot-legger Saturday night.

Miss Irma Moots got almost halfway home last night before she wuz knocked down an' robbed.

"We may buy a little coal t' use in case of sickness, but th' engine keeps our sedan het up jest fine," says Mrs. Art Beasley.

Many of Abe Martin's mannerisms have given hints to the other columnists. In particular, Luke McLuke and Sam Hill have used almost daily the type of observation he affects on modern improvements:

Th' girl that used t' sigh fer a tall, dark prince with a raven mustache now has a daughter that hankers for a real sport with a yaller roadster.

Who remembers when we used t' eat in th' kitchen?

The longer essays of the sage of Brown County often take the shape of interviews with local worthies: — *Th' Guitar,* by 'Squire Marsh Swallow; *Criminals an' Home*

Trainin', by Constable Newt Plum; *Th' Generous Distribution o' Trouble*, by Rev. Wiley Tanger; *What th' People Want*, by th' proprietor o' th' Little Gem Resturint. Miss Fawn Lippincutt contributes romances of the type of *Velma's Vow*. Occasionally Abe Martin himself relates the biography of some distinguished villager, such as Mr. Teckla Bramble.

MR. TECKLA BRAMBLE

Mr. Teckla Bramble wuz born in th' sixties on th' ol' Bramble farm three miles east o' th' pumpin' station an' early gave evidence of a hatred fer agriculture, that wuz apparent t' all. After reluctantly follerin' th' plow until his twenty-first year he sold a calf an' severed domestic relations with his father, an' struck out fer Chicago. After lookin' over th' field an' sizin' up th' opportunities, he hunted up th' city park whose facilities fer deep an' serious reflection are well known t' all who have tried t' gain a foot hold in a crowded an' heartless metropolis. Penniless an' unattached, weak an' stiff from hunger an' exposure, th' world looked black indeed t' Teckla Bramble. Too honorable t' launch forth on a career o' crime an' utterly opposed t' manual labor, he had almost despaired, when, with supernatural strength, he pulled himself t'gether an decided t' make one more heroic effort t' find somethin' that just suited him. Success crowned his efforts an' he became a street car conductor. Th' clang an' excitement o' his new position seemed t' deaden his finer instincts an' he soon contracted th' wine habit an' later returned t' th' park. It wuz early May an' th' fragrance o' flowers an' th' song o' birds filled th' air, while umbreller menders, fresh from ther winter sentences, filled th' benches an' doped out ther' summer itineraries. A new hope filled th' breast o' Teckla Bramble. Would he become an umbreller mender? Others had succeeded, why not he? Th' die wuz cast! Allus close t' nature an' a keen observer, Mr. Bramble's tours have at least been a success educationally an t'day he is a veritable storehouse o' anecdote an' information.

The sage of Brown County is particularly skillful in remodeling old adages. "All that glisters is not gold,"

becomes for him, "Christmas jewelry often turns green in the spring." "Someone is always taking the joy out of life," is transfigured into, "Ther's somebuddy at ever' dinner party that eats all th' celery." "A rolling stone gathers no moss" is modernized into, "You won't skid if you stay in a rut."

His fellow-humorists have been unsparing in their praises. Irvin Cobb exclaims, "Thank the Lord for Abe Martin." Will Rogers says, "Kin Hubbard is writing the best humor in America today." Franklin P. Adams foresees: "And, perhaps, years after he is dead, the lofty critics will speak, as they now do of Artemus Ward, of the great and American satire of Kin Hubbard (Abe Martin)."

Altogether, Kin Hubbard's Abe Martin is the most notable of our native philosopher-humorists of today. It is impossible to judge whether he will appear to future generations the equal of Ward and Billings. His sayings deserve a nation-wide appreciation.

It remains to be seen whether Dulcy, Aunt Prudence Heckleberry, and the other personages of the newspaper "colyums" will evolve a new set of satiric types. Don Marquis's Old Soak[2] employs a most pertinent irony when he urges the artistic functions of the liquor habit. He wishes, "to describe what the saloon that has been banished was like so that future generations of posterity will know what it was like, they never having seen one." And leisurely, teased by old memories of happier days, he reminisces of times when the home was not polluted by home-brew and the boys were brought up to drink in the barroom like gentlemen.

> Another thing I miss in regard to all those vanished barrooms being closed up is kind feeling about respect to the old especially to parents and them that has departed.

[2] Marquis, Don Robert Perry, 1878, *The Old Soak,* and *Hail and Farewell,* 1921.

Where is the younger generations of posterity going to learn how to be kind hearted about home and mother now that the barrooms is all closed up I would like to know?

It used to be that a lot of fellows would get all tanked up of an afternoon or evening and in the right sort of a place they would get to singing songs.

All them songs about home and mother and to treat her right now that her hair had turned gray. I never was much of a one to sing myself especially unless I had a few drinks into me.

But whether I helped sing them or not all them songs would make a better man of me. You stand up to a bar or sit down at a table and listen to them songs for two or three hours and if you are any kind of a man at all you will wish you had always done the right thing and now that all them songs about home and mother has been took away from me I ain't the man I used to be at all.

I feel myself going down hill because my softer emotions and feelings ain't never stirred up by nothing any more.

Well, this Eighteenth Commandment is going to make a hard-hearted country out of this here country. Nobody is never going to think as much of home and mother as they used to. And I guess them prohibitionists won't feel so smart when they see all them old ladies with gray hair flung out onto the streets in the rainy weather just because nobody would pay the mortgage off.

In his second attempt at improving the morals of the country the Old Soak gives his version of the history of the world.[3]

From the times when Neebuchadnezzar and the other old Beegats made merry with their attendants the portcullises, their multitudinous wives, their camels and their fine horses, down through the days of Henry Cat and Marie Antoinette, men believed in freedom and right living. What is this country coming to if the prohibitionists and the little athyises can take away a man's rights and set all the bootleggers to buying chattos in France?

[3] Marquis, Don Robert Perry, *The Old Soak's History of the World,* 1924.

He falls into a resigned pessimism over the fate of democracy.

One hesitates to commit oneself as to whether or not the Old Soak's theories are shared by a large proportion of native Americans. Certainly he speaks out boldly against the faction in power; he makes use of a wry eloquence against hypocrisies and corruption; he aspires to effect by the force of satire a change in the customs and the laws of the land. Let him wear the burdock wreath as the latest and most subtly ambitious of our humble philosophers.

The provincial philosopher is the most timeworn of our American character types. He has had full expression since his emergence as comic Yankee and Southerner. In each generation he has made fresh appearance as jester, censor, and guide. The old fellow is still hale and strong. It is not impossible to predict that he will some day vanish under changing social and economic conditions to give place to new national types. Yet whatever his future history may be, he has served for a time as the preacher of our conventional morality, the incarnation of our provincial attitude toward life, and the dominant figure in our native satire.

After long periods of experimentation, his representation has narrowed down to the humble sage. It has been some time since the rascal or the simpleton have figured as rustic critics. They have scarcely appeared since the Civil War. But today, in newspaper column, in magazine essay, and in the advertisements of your favorite tobacco, the wise old man has many minor manifestations which keep him always before the eyes of an admiring public.

No other country has given so much weight, so constant attention throughout a long period, to the opinions and the philosophy of the common man. England has

listened to Kipling's Soldiers Three, Arthur Morrison's slum-dwellers, and W. W. Jacob's longshoremen with passing interest. Michel and Bonhomme Jacques are not yet significant literary figures. Only America has had in modern times a continued tradition of the interference of the unlettered man, a habit of giving ear to his political demands and his insistence on conventional morality. Only American letters can show so large, so persistent, and so significant a body of political and social satires, of comic writing and of sententiae for which the man of the people is spokesman.

The cracker-box philosopher is at our elbow. Unconsciously we have made him for many years the literary symbol of Uncle Sam.

A bibliography of the works of F. P. Dunne may be found in the Cambridge history of American literature, vol. 4, p. 641.

GLASS, MONTAGUE MARSDEN

Potash and Perlmutter. Their copartnership ventures and adventures. 1910.
Abe and Mawruss, 1911.
Object: Matrimony, 1912.
Elkan Lubiner, American, 1912.
Souvenir Book by Montague Glass, 1913. Copyrighted by A. H. Woods.
And the Greatest of These (pamp.), 1914.
Books as Good Reading (pamp.), 1914.
Object: Matrimony. A comedy in one act (in MSS). 1915.
The Untrained Nurse. A vaudeville sketch in one act. 1915.
The Competitive Nephew, 1915.
Worrying Won't Win, 1918.
Potash & Perlmutter Settle Things, 1919.
Potash & Perlmutter at the Peace Conference, 1919.
Present Company Excepted. A sort of a play in two acts or thereabouts. 1922.
Potash and Perlmutter. By Montague Glass and Charles Klein. 1913.

Abe and Mawruss. A Drama by Montague Glass and R. C. Megrue. 1915.

Making Over Milton. A comedy in three acts, by M. Glass and Jules Eckert Goodman (in MSS.). 1915.

Business before Pleasure. A play in three acts, by M. Glass and J. E. Goodman (in MSS.). 1917.

The Land of Joy. Play in prologue and two acts, by M. Glass and C. A. DeLima (in MSS). 1917.

Object: Matrimony. Comedy by M. Glass and J. E. Goodman. 1915.

Potash and Perlmutter in Society. Comedy by M. Glass and R. C. Megrue. 1916.

Why Worry? A play in three acts by M. Glass and J. E. Goodman (in MSS.). 1918.

The Honorable Sam Davis. A play in three acts by M. Glass and J. E. Goodman (in MSS.). 1919. Produced with alterations, under title, *His Honor Abe Potash.*

Potash and Perlmutter Motors, Ltd. A comedy in three acts, by M. Glass and J. E. Goodman (in MSS.). 1921. Produced under title, *Partners Again,* in 1922.

It's Never Too Late. By M. Glass and J. E. Goodman (in MSS.). 1923. Produced in 1924.

Wall Street. A play in three acts, by M. Glass and Oscar Carter (in MSS.). 1921.

The '49ers. Revue by L. Gensler, D. Taylor, F. P. Adams, R. Benchley, H. Broun, R. W. Lardner, Dorothy Parker, M. Glass, M. Ryskind, W. Kuhn, H. Dietz, R. E. Sherwood, and A. H. Samuels. 1922.

Potash & Perlmutter. A comedy in four acts, by W. Mason. Adapted from the book of the same name by Montague Glass (in MSS.). 1911. Unauthorized adaptation.

Potash and Perlmutter. Dramatization in three acts, by George Darvy, of certain stories by Montague Glass (in MSS.). 1913. Unauthorized adaptation.

Potash and Perlmutter. Play in three acts, by M. Glass; translated (into Yiddish) by Nahum Rackow (in MSS.). 1918.

Potash and Perlmutter. Komodie in drei Akten von M. Glass und C. Klein. Berlin, 1921. Felix Block Erben. 1921.

Glass, Max (*sic*), a Klein, C., *Potash a Perlmutter* (Firma) Komedie o trech jednanich. Napsoli M. Glass a C. Klein

(translated by Stephen Zitny, under title "*The Firm*"). Prague, 1923. Zora, Spolecnost s.r.c. nakladatelstvi. 1923.

HUBBARD, FRANK MCKINNEY

Abe Martin's Almanack, 1906.
Abe Martin of Brown County, Indiana, 1907.
Abe Martin's Almanack for 1908, 1907.
Abe Martin's Almanack for 1909, 1908.
Back Country Folks, 1910.
Brown County Folks, 1910.
Abe Martin's Almanack, 1911.
Short Furrows (in Indiana Society of Chicago. Souvenir collection of books by Indiana authors. c. 1911, vol. 3), 1911.
Abe Martin's Primer, 1914.
New Sayings and Sketches, 1915.
Abe Martin's Sayings and Velma's Vow, 1916.
New Sayings by Abe Martin, 1917.
Abe Martin's Back Country Sayings, 1917.
Abe Martin on the War and Other Things, 1919.
Abe Martin's Home-Cured Philosophy, 1919.
Abe Martin — The Joker on Facts, 1920.
Abe Martin's Almanack, 1921.
These Days, 1922.
Comments of Abe Martin and His Neighbors, 1923.
Abe Martin's Folks, n.d.
Abe Martin's Sayings and Sketches, n.d.
Abe Martin. Comedy in two acts, with music and lyrics by Marie Rich (pseud of M. R. Lockwood) and Kin Hubbard (in MSS.), 1919.

INDEX

Abolition Movement, 44–57; *passim*, 122.
Adams, Franklin P., 170.
Adams, John Quincy, 24.
Addums, Mozis, *pseud.* (G. W. Bagby), 94–95.
Alcott, Amos Bronson, 40.
Aldrich, T. B., 138.
Algerine Captive (*The*), by Royall Tyler, 15.
Allen, Samantha, *pseud.* (Marietta Holley), 132.
American Museum (Philadelphia, Pa.), 4.
Americans in England, by Mrs. Susannah Rowson, 5.
Anti-slavery Standard, 44.
Arp, Bill, *pseud.* (C. H. Smith), 96, 104–118, 131, 146, 156.
Augusta (Ga.) *Sentinel,* 74.

Bagby, George William (Mozis Addums, *pseud.*), 88, 94–95, 96, 132.
Baldwin, Joseph Glover, 80–83, 95.
Barnum, Phineas T., 145.
Bedott, The Widow, *pseud.* (Mrs. Miriam Whitcher), 132.
Beecher, Lyman, 74.
Bennett, Emerson, 79.
Better Sort (*The*) (*anon.*), 5.
Biddle, Nicholas, 35–38, *passim.*
Big Bear of Arkansaw, 77–79.
Biglow Papers, 43–64, *passim.* 104, 115, 123, 131, 145, 163.
Biglow, William, 7.
Billings, Josh, *pseud.* (H. W. Shaw), 146–157, 158, 168.
Bolus, Ovid, 82–83.
Boone, Daniel, 24, 67–69, *passim.*
Boston (Mass.) *Courier,* 44.
Brackenridge, H. H., 27, 39.
Breitman, Hans, *pseud.* (C. G. Leland), 132.
Brother Jonathan, by John Neal, 15.
Bunyon, Paul, 1.
Brown, John (of Ossawatamie), 136.
Browne, Charles Farrar (Artemus Ward, *pseud.*), 132–146.

Calhoun, John C., 31, 47.
Carey, Matthew, 4, 6.
Carleton, Will, 159.
Carnegie, Andrew, 161.
Carpet Bag (Boston, Mass.), 120, 133.
Carson, Kit, 67.
Century Magazine, 150.
Clapp, Henry, 138.
Clarke, Matthew St. Clair, 67–68.
Clay, Henry, 30, 31, 34, 146.
Clemens, Samuel L. (Mark Twain, *pseud.*), 76, 94, 95, 127, 139, 140–141.
Cobb, Irvin, 167, 170.
Confederate States, 103–128, *passim.*
Contrast (*The*), by Royall Tyler, 2–4, 5.
Cooper, James Fenimore, 16, 24.

Cooper, Thomas, 31, 88.
Crane, Ichabod, 14–15.
Crockett, David, x, 24, 39, 67–69.
Cubb, Humphry, 5–6.

Dartmouth Eagle (Hanover, N. H.), 7.
Davis, Charles Augustus, 19, 32–38, *passim*, 43, 47, 61.
Davis, Jefferson, 62, 71, 105, 110–111, 130.
Davis, Reuben, 70.
Della Cruscan school of English poetry, 7.
Derby, G. H. (John Phoenix, *pseud.*), 132, 146.
Dewey, Adm. George, 160.
Dickens, Charles, 83, 95.
Dooley, Martin, *pseud.* (F. P. Dunne), ix, x, xi, 122, 160–163.
Dow, Jr., *pseud.* (E. G. Paige), 127–128.
Down-Easters (*The*), by John Neal, 16.
Downing, Jack, x, 1, 6, 39, 89, 123, 124, 146, *pseud.* of Seba Smith, 25–31, 50, 61, *pseud.* of C. A. Davis, 32–39, 61. See also Smith, Seba, and Davis, C. A.
Dunlap, William, 4.

Elliott, Sarah Barnwell, 69.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 63, 142.
Evans, Estwick, 11.
Everett, Edward, 41.

Fadden, Chimmie, *pseud.* 159–160.
Farmer, The Old, *pseud.* (R. B. Thomas), x, 13–14.
Farmer's Museum (Walpole, N. H.), 7, 10.
Father (*The*), by William Dunlap, 4.
Fauntleroy, Little Lord, 159.
Federal Orrery (Boston, Mass.), 7, 10.
Field, J. N. (Straws, *pseud.*), 73.
Fink, Mike, 79.
Forest Rose (*The*), by Samuel Woodworth, 18.
Fox, John, Jr., 69.
Franklin, Benjamin, x, 39, 41, 67, 156.

Glass, Montague Marsden, 163–164.
Grant, U. S., 119–120, 126, 129.
Greene, Asa, 31, 40.
Guest, Edgar, 167.

Hackett, James H., Sr., 12–13.
Hale, E. E., 44.
Haliburton, Thomas Chandler (Sam Slick, *pseud.*), 19, 38–42.
Hall, Basil, 39.
Halleck, Fitz-Greene, 32.
Halpine, C. G. (Private Miles O'Reilly, *pseud.*), 120–122, 132. 133.
Hammett, Samuel, 42.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 63.
Harris, G. W. (Sut Lovingood, *pseud.*), 93–94, 132.
Harris, Joel Chandler, 69, 95.
Harte, Francis Bret, 140.
Harum, David, 159.
Hill, G. H. (Yankee Hill), 12, 18.
Holley, Marietta (Samantha Allen, *pseud.*), 132.
Holmes, O. W., 46.
Honeywood, St., John, 7, 49.
Hooper, J. J. (Simon Suggs, *pseud.*), 73, 80, 83–89, 93, 96.
Hubbard, F. McK. (Abe Martin, *pseud.*), 167–170.
Hughes, Thomas, 45, 58, 64.

Irving, Washington, 14–15, 27.
Irwin, Wallace (Hashimura Togo, *pseud.*), 164–167.

Jackson, Andrew, 24–38, *passim*, 67.
Jonathan (in *The Contrast*), 2–4.
Jonathan Postfree, by L. Beach, 17.
Jonathan's Courtship, by T. G. Fessenden, 8.
Johnson, Andrew, 126, 129–130.
Johnston, Albert Sidney, 70.
Jones, John Beauchamp, 88.
Jones, Major Joseph, *pseud.* (W. T. Thompson), 89–93.

Kennedy, J. P., 66, 88.
Kerr, Orpheus C., *pseud.* (R. H. Newell), 104, 118–120, 122.

Lamar, John Basil, 95.
Lamar, L. Q. C., 70, 75, 80.
Lapham, Silas, 159.
Leatherstocking, 67, 69.
Leland, C. G. (Hans Breitmann, *pseud.*), 132, 138.
Library of Humorous American Works, 73.
Lincoln, Abraham, x, 106–110, 121, 123, 124, 126–128.
Local Color Movement, 158–159.
Locke, D. R. (Petroleum V. Nasby, *pseud.*), 63, 122–131, 132, 134.
Longstreet, A. B., 71, 74–77, 79, 93.
Longfellow, H. W., 44, 66.
Lovingood, Sut, *pseud.* (G. W. Harris), 1, 93–94.
Lowell, J. R., 10, 19, 34, 43–64, 104, 115, 145.
Lowell, Maria (White), 44.

McKinley, William, 160–161.
McLuke, Luke, *pseud.*, 168.
Madison (Ga), *Miscellany*, 92.
Magnolia (*The*), 74.
Man Without a Country (*The*), 52.
Marquis, Don, 170–172.
Martin, Abe, *pseud.* (F. McK. Hubbard) ix, xi, 168–170.
Martineau, Harriet, 39.
Mason, Walt, 167.
Methodist Quarterly, 74.
Modest Soldier (*The*), by W. Dunlap, 4.
Morton, Mrs. S. J. (Philenia, *pseud.*), 7.
Murfree, Mary Noailles (Charles Egbert Craddock, *pseud.*), 69.

Nasby, Petroleum V. *pseud.* (D. R. Locke) x, 104, 118, 122–131.
Nast, Thomas, 159.
Neal, John, 15–16, 27.
Neihardt, John G., 79.
New York Spirit of the Times, 72–73.
Newell, R. H. (Orpheus C. Kerr, *pseud.*), 118–120.
Noah, M. M., 17–18.
Nullification movement, 28, 30.

O'Brien, Fitz James, 138.
Ode for the Fourth of July, by Royall Tyler, 8–10.
Old Farmer's Almanac (*The*), 13–14.
Old Soak (*The*), 170–172.
O'Reilly, Private Miles, *pseud.* (C. G. Halpine), 120–122, 132, 160.
Orion (*The*), 74.

Paige, E. G. (Dow, Jr., *pseud.*), 127–128.
Paine, Robert Treat, 7.

Partington, Mrs., *pseud.* (B. P. Shillaber), 132.
Perlmutter, Mawruss, see Potash and Perlmutter.
Pfaff's Bohemian Club, 138.
Phoenix, John, *pseud.* (G. H. Derby), 132, 146.
Poe, E. A., 46, 48.
Politician Outwitted (The), by S. Low, 5–6.
Port Folio (The) (Philadelphia, Pa.), 10.
Porter, William Trotter, 71–74.
Potash and Perlmutter, xi, 163–164.
Prentice, G. D., 132.
Punch (London, Eng.), 141.

Quitman, John A., 70.

Richard, Poor, x, 41.
Riley, J. W., 159.
Robb, John S., 73.
Robertson, Thomas W., 141.
Rogers, Will, 167, 170.
Roosevelt, Theodore, 160, 165.
Rowson, Mrs. Susannah, 5.

Sala, G. A., 141.
Sawin, Birdofredum, 52–58, 59, 115, 124, 131.
Sedgwick, Catherine Maria, 15, 27, 40.
Shaw, Henry Wheeler (Josh Billings, *pseud.*), 132, 133, 146–157, 158, 168.
She Would Be a Soldier, by M. M. Noah, 17–18.
Shillaber, B. P. (Mrs. Partington, *pseud.*), 132.
Silsbee, J. S., 18.
Simpson, Alexander, 18.
Slick, Sam, *pseud.* (T. C. Haliburton), 11, 38–42, 43, 58, 61, 118, 123, 124.
Smith, Charles Henry (Bill Arp, *pseud.*), 104–118, 131, 146, 156.
Smith, Seba (Jack Downing, *pseud.*), 19, 24–31, 32, 38, 42, 49, 61.
Southern Field and Fireside, 74.
Southern Literary Messenger, 74, 94.
Spirit of the Farmer's Museum, 10.
Spoon River Anthology, 159.
Stage Yankee, 2–6, 11, 12–13, 17–19, 24, 40.
Stein, Gertrude, 151.
Stephens, Ann Sophia, 42.
Story, Isaac, 7, 8.
Stowe, Mrs. H. B., 44.
Suggs, Simon, *pseud.* (J. J. Hooper), 1, 73, 80, 83–89, 93, 95, 96
Sumner, Charles, 123.

Taylor, Zachary, 50–54.
Tensas, Madison, *pseud.,* 73.
Thackeray, W. M., 95.
Thomas, Robert B. (The Old Farmer, *pseud.*), 13–14.
Thompson, William Tappan (Major Jones, *pseud.*), 89–93, 132.
Thorpe, T. B., 73, 77–79.
Thumb, Gen. Tom, 68.
Togo, Hashimura, *pseud.* (Wallace Irwin), 164–167.
Traveller Returned (The), 5.
Trollopiad (The), 40.
Trumbull, John, 27.
Tyler, Royall, 2–4, 7, 8–10, 15, 40.

Uncle Henry, *pseud.* (George Creel), xi, 167.
Uncle Tom's Cabin, 52.
United States Bank, 25, 34–38.
U. S. — War with Mexico, 45, 47, 50–54, 59.
U. S. — Civil War, 55–57, 61–63,

103–115, 118–121, 123, 124–128.
U. S. — Reconstruction Period, 103–104, 113–115, 129–131.

Van Buren, Martin, 29, 33–34.
Vanity Fair (New York City, N. Y.), 138, 139.

Ward, Artemus, *pseud.* (C. F. Browne), x, 104, 110–111, 113–114, 132–146, 157, 170.
Webster, Daniel, 29, 30, 31, 35.
Welles, Gideon, 160.
Wharton, G. M., 73.
Whitcher, Mrs. Miriam (The Widow Bedott, *pseud.*), 132.
Whitman, Walt, 138.
Whittier, J. G., 44, 63, 66.
Wilbur, Homer, 58–59.
Willis, N. P., 46.
Wilson, Pudd'nhead, x.
Winter, William, 138.
Woodworth, Samuel, 18–19.

Yankee Doodle, 2.
Yorker's Stratagem, 5.

VITA

Jennette Reid Tandy was born September 27, 1889, at Vevay, Indiana. Her secondary education was received at Vevay High School and at the Bartholomew-Clifton College Preparatory School. She attended Wellesley College during the years 1907–1908 and 1908–1909, and the University of Chicago in 1909–1911. From the last named institution she received the degree of Ph.B. in 1911. In 1912–1913 she attended the library school of Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. For the year 1913–1914 she was assistant in cataloguing and reference department of the Cincinnati Public Library. In 1914–1915 she was librarian of the Kendallville Public Library, Kendallville, Indiana. The year 1915 she spent in travel. For three years, 1916–1919, she taught English and mathematics in the Vevay High Schools, Vevay, Indiana. From 1919 to 1922 she was a graduate student at Columbia University, receiving the degree of M.A. in 1920. In 1922–1923 she was instructor in English at Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana. The following year she spent in graduate study at Columbia. During her attendance at Columbia she has received graduate instruction from Professors Thorndike, Trent, Lawrence, Krapp, Van Doren, Fletcher, Ayres, Wright, Baldwin and Alden. During the year 1924–1925 she has acted as research assistant to the Department of English and Comparative Literature of Columbia University.

Her publications are as follows: "College Teaching of Elementary Bibliography," *Educational Review* 62: 382–391, December 1921; "Pro-slavery Propaganda in American Fiction of the Fifties," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 21: 40–50, 170–178, January, April 1922; "At Grandmother's" (four poems), *Poetry*, a magazine of verse, 23: 78–79, November 1923.

/817.52T163C>C1/

DATE DUE

APR 04 1986

Demco, Inc. 38-293

3 2311 00107 799 2

817.52
T163c

34805

Tandy, Jeanette

Crackerbox philosophers in
American humor and satire